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SCULPTURAL TRADITIONS OF RAJASTAHN

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SCULPTURAL TRADITIONS OF RAJASTHAN

(Ca. 800 - 1000 A.D.)



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Neelima Vashishtha

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Foreword

The modern historiography of Indian art began with the descriptive survey of monuments by archaeologists and the application of concepts and canons based on the history of Western art by historians like Fergusson and V. Smith. With Havell, Coomaraswamy and V. S. Agrawala began a new kind of art history which gave due attention to the symbology and the characteristic idiom of Indian art traditions. It recognized that art is not merely an artifice to please the senses but a language which speaks to the mind and heart. It has been said that the conception of beauty in the West moved from the ancient ideal of the perfection of generic or universal form to the modern ideal of the characteristic expressiveness of individual form. In India form or *rūpa* was valued not so much for its representation of external Nature as for its capacity to reveal inner Nature or *bhava*. The language of art is designed to articulate the permanent moods of the soul, and its enjoyment is ultimately nothing but a species of self-realization mediated by the felt images of experience. This remains the essential conception of art in the Indian tradition even though its continental history includes a vast variety of different opinions and an equally varied achievement. The fact that the greater part of ancient Indian art has been lost without a trace makes any historical generalization even more difficult. Nevertheless, it remains true that we must not think of temples, images and pictures as things, an artificial world parallel to the natural one, but as representations of ideas, an expression of the inner world. The appreciation of this inner world can only come through the painstaking study of the Indian cultural tradition. The understanding of the art object can never be reduced to its mere sensuous perception, nor can this understanding come

simply in terms of universal principles gleaned from any or every culture. It necessarily requires a study of the ideas, conventions and norms of taste characteristic of some cultural tradition or epoch.

Since the work of Coomaraswamy so much has come to be widely recognized, no one would say now that the history of Indian art is one of decay and that its periods of creativity were simply periods of imitation. Nevertheless, the task of studying the development of Indian art in the background of cultural changes is a vast and challenging one. The present work undertakes the analysis of sculptural development in Rajasthan from A.D. 800 to A.D. 1000. In particular it studies the cult background of images and seeks "to correlate the abstract ideals and their concrete plastic forms in the wider context" of historical and cultural development. It describes the building of temples and the variation of themes according to the cults – *Vaiṣṇava*, *Śaiva*, *Śakta*, *Saura*. Gupta sculptural tradition developed and reached high perfection in this period, declining later by becoming stiff and stereotyped.

Much of Rajasthan is said to have been included then in the sphere of Gurjaradeśa and it was the age of a struggle for supremacy between the Imperial Pratihāras and the Rāṣṭrakūṭas. The Gurjara-Pratihāras, the Chāhamānas and the Guhilaputras ruled the different parts of Rajasthan. Different cults flourished together peacefully and splendid temples were built in different parts of the region. Temples of Osia and Kirāḍū, Chittorgarh and Āhaḍ, Jhālarāpaṭan and Bāḍolī, Ābānerī and Parānagar may be mentioned as illustration.

From the Gupta period the Smārta-Paurāṇika religion had grown up. This represented a sea-change from the ancient Vedic religion. The deity was now fully humanized and the Paurāṇika myths became the basis for representing its diverse aspects. Instead of the older ritual new forms of worship were evolved. Vedic religion had been exclusive. The new Smārta-Paurāṇika cults were available to all sections of society. God came to be conceived above all as a person with whom a personal relationship of *Bhakti* was possible. While the number of deities and cults multiplied a broad syncretism

reflected the prevailing spirit of tolerance. Within each of the cults, Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava etc., the deity was imaged in diverse ways. The *Vyūhas* and *Avatāras* of Viṣṇu formed numerous themes. The *Vyūhas* were emanations and represented an earlier phase. The *Avatāras* especially the *avatāras* in human form became the most popular objects of the growing religion of *Bhakti*. The *Saumya* and *Ugra* forms of Śiva and diverse forms of *Śakti* were elaborated iconographically. Image worship in temples came to be gradually the heart of religious life. The author details the growth of cults, their diverse iconography and the structure and carving of the temples in a brief but clear manner.

The author is indeed eminently qualified for the difficult but significant task she has undertaken. She is a Sanskritist, a historian and an artist in her own right. She writes with rare erudition and admirable lucidity. Her work represents the new kind of art history where technical description, cultural interpretation and historical explanation are combined in due proportion. I am sure it will remain a work of much interest for students and scholars alike for a long time.

OCTOBER 29, 1988

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Preface

This work attempts to study the sculptural traditions of the temples of Rajasthan roughly from ca. 800 A.D. to 1000 A.D. Based on contemporary sources and field work it traces illustrative examples up to the 12th century A.D. These sculptural traditions have been studied in the light of the development of the religious cults in different parts of Rajasthan. In order to understand them, sculpture has been interpreted here as a relationship between abstract ideals and their concrete symbols. Man has always used images to bring the invisible realm of the spiritual and divine beings within the range of perception. He has made symbols and cult images in earthly substances as permanent as stone and has tried to see the divine power in them. Besides, for the proper appreciation of the sculptural traditions of a particular period, the historical and religious background of that epoch has been reviewed. In view of this, an attempt has been made to study and correlate the abstract ideals and their concrete plastic form in the wider context of the historical and cultural background and general traditions which were prevalent in India at that time. This approach has also helped in examining the regional and sub-regional variations in sculptures despite their representation according to the iconographic and Paurāṇic texts. For the study of the abstract ideals which have formulated the sculpture, the iconographic, Paurāṇic, literary and epigraphical sources of the early and contemporary periods have been studied.

This work has been divided into eight chapters. The first chapter examines the influence of the geographical, historical and religious conditions on the sculptures and temple building activities in

different parts of Rajasthan. The second chapter describes the main temple sites which developed as a result of many of these factors. Following this, the work can be divided into two major parts. The first starts with chapter third and ends with chapter seventh where the development of different religious cults and their influence on sculptural representation have been discussed. Chapter eighth comprises the second part. It tackles the general principles which were followed in sculptural representation. It is interesting to note that despite the varied religious themes, there is a unity in the sculptural decorations of the temples.

From the beginning of the 20th century a number of scholars and archaeologists have explored and published reports on the sculptural wealth of Rajasthan. Besides, the epigraphical records found from the temples have also been published for purposes of tracing the genealogies of the rulers. However, these publications are isolated and have unduly ignored the correlation of the sculptural traditions with the contemporary religious, literary and historical traditions of India. The present work endeavours to fill in this gap.

The sculptural traditions of ca. 800 – 1000 A.D., present a continuity of the Gupta period with the main difference that they are small in size, unusual in elaboration and intricate in carvings. At the end of the 4th century A.D., the greater part of Rajasthan was within the confines of the Gupta Empire. The Gupta Empire came to an end but its sculptural traditions persisted in Rajasthan up to the 10th century A.D., with some local variations. This is evident in the temple sites at Osia, Ābānerī, Alwar, Udaipur, Bādoli, etc. In Rajasthan, the sculptural traditions reached its apogee during ca. 800 - 1000 A.D., though the stylistic changes can be traced in them up to the 12th century A. D. The period from 11th century A.D., onwards represents a decay in sculpture having become more stiff and stereotyped as compared to that of ca. 800 – 1000 A.D.

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Abbreviations

<i>ABORI</i>	<i>Annals of Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona.</i>
<i>ARRMA</i>	<i>Annual Report Rajputana Museum, Ajmer.</i>
<i>ASIAR</i>	<i>Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Report.</i>
<i>ASIR</i>	<i>Archaeological Survey of India Reports, 23 vols., A. Cunningham.</i>
<i>CII</i>	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum.</i>
<i>DHI</i>	<i>The Development of Hindu Iconography, Jitendra Nath Banerjea.</i>
<i>DHNI</i>	<i>Dynastic History of Northern India, H. C. Ray.</i>
<i>EHl</i>	<i>Elements of Hindu Iconography, T. A. Gopinath Rao.</i>
<i>EI</i>	<i>Epigraphia Indica.</i>
<i>ETSAI</i>	<i>Evolution of Theistic Sects in Ancient India, Sudhakar Chattopadhyaya.</i>
<i>HIEA</i>	<i>History of Indian and Eastern Architecture, James Fergusson and Jas Burgess.</i>
<i>HIIA</i>	<i>History of Indian and Indonesian Art, Anand K. Coomaraswamy.</i>
<i>IAR</i>	<i>Indian Archaeology : A Review.</i>
<i>IHQ</i>	<i>The Indian Historical Quarterly.</i>
<i>JAS</i>	<i>Journal of Asiatic Society.</i>
<i>JBBRAS</i>	<i>The Journal of Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.</i>
<i>JGJRI</i>	<i>Journal of Ganganath Jha Research Institute.</i>
<i>JIH</i>	<i>Journal of Indian History.</i>
<i>JISOA</i>	<i>Journal of Indian Society of Oriental Arts.</i>

- JMU* *The Journal of Mysore University.*
- JOI* *Journal of Oriental Institute, (Baroda).*
- JUPHS* *Journal of U.P. Historical Society, Lucknow.*
- MBH* *Mahabharata.*
- OHRJ* *The Orissa Historical Research Journal.*
- PRASWC* *Progress Report Archaeological Survey Western Circle.*
- RTA* *Rajasthan Through the Ages from the Earliest Times to 1316 A.D., Vol. I, Dasharatha Sharma.*
- VIJ* *Vishveshvaranand Indological Journal, Hoshiarpur.*
- VSMRS* *Vaiṣṇavism Śaivism and Other Minor Sects, Ramkrishna Gopal Bhandarkar.*

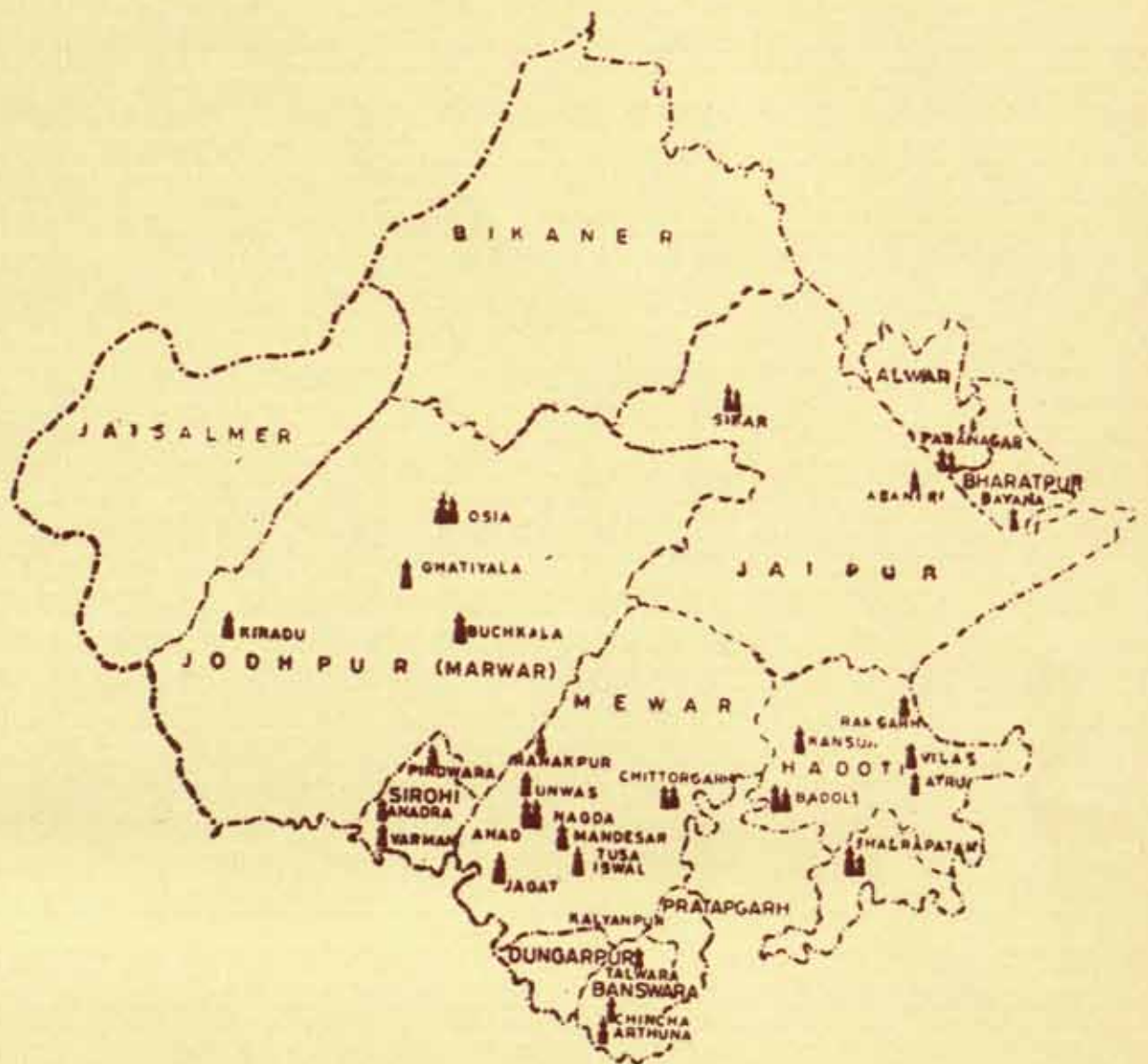
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Temples in Rajasthan: A Geographical And Historical Perspective (800 A.D. - 1000 A.D.)



Temples are the repositories of the traditions of sculpture in India. Geographical, historical and religious factors have played a significant role in their development. A fertile region with rivers, sufficient rainfall and stone quarries encouraged their construction, while a place with shifting sand-dunes and scanty rainfall impeded their progress. Besides, a stable political order and a sense of security created suitable conditions for building temples. Moreover, the patronage of the rulers and the co-operation of the people further encouraged their construction and maintenance. Even the invading armies did not hamper the temple-building activity if the invader cherished common religious heritage and traditions of the invaded people.

It is the socio-religious traditions of a period that influenced the sculptures carved in a temple. This implies that for the proper appreciation of the sculptures, a knowledge of the development of the canons of music, dancing, painting and of all other arts is necessary as without this a beholder can only see the outward form of an image and its meaning may not become clear to him. This is the reason why for the proper appreciation of sculpture the *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* has emphasized the knowledge of all other arts upon which it is dependent.¹ Even the sculptor would miss the spirit of creation if he did not understand the significance of the socio-religious background. This does not mean that sculpture has no aesthetic and philosophic values of its own. However, for a proper understanding and appreciation of any sculpture a thorough awareness of the history, culture and the socio-religious factors of the region is necessary both for the sculptor and the spectator.

For these reasons, for the study of the traditions of the sculptures of Rajasthan during the 9th and 10th centuries of the Christian era a knowledge of the natural, historical and religious conditions of that period is a prerequisite. Therefore, before exploring the temples to study the sculptural traditions, it would be necessary to take a panoramic view of the geographical, historical and religious conditions of Rajasthan in the aforesaid period. These aspects are discussed in the following sections.

Geographical Background

The area of the modern State of Rajasthan mainly comprises the erstwhile nineteen Princely States² of Rajputana and the British territory of Ajmer. Rajasthan is bounded on the west and north-west by Pakistan, on the north and north-east by Punjab, on the east by Uttar Pradesh, on the east and south-east by Madhya Pradesh and on the south-west by Gujarat.

Rajasthan presents striking variations of physical features, which have resulted in surprising variations of climate, soil, population, agricultural and mineral resources. These variations are due to the Aravalli ranges which run³ across the state from north-east to south-west for nearly 692 kms and divide Rajasthan into different climatic zones viz., (i) Western sandy plains, (ii) Aravalli range and hilly region, and (iii) Hadoti plateau and the eastern plains.

(i) Western Sandy Plains

The area west of the Aravalli is further divided into two zones : (a) Sandy-Arid Zone and (b) Semi-Arid plains.

(a) *Sandy-Arid Zone* : This zone is the extreme part of Western Rajasthan comprising the areas of Barmer, Jaisalmer, Bikaner, Churu and a part of Jodhpur. It is mainly covered with sand dunes. The aridity of the desert made this area largely inhospitable for big human settlements. Recurrent famines, shortage of water and scanty rainfall made the living of the people of this area hard and compelled them to adopt a nomadic way of life. Consequently, no extensive cultural and religious activities such as the building of temples could take place in this region during the period of this study, except at few places like Kirādū, Buchkalā, etc.

(b) *Semi-Arid plains*: The semi-arid zone includes districts of Jalore, Sirohi, Pali, Nagaur, Jodhpur, Sikar and a part of Jaipur. The transitional climatic conditions are found in this region.⁴ The

western part along the base of Arāvallis i.e., the *Goḍwār* tract is drained and fertilized by the Lūṇī river and its tributaries.

On account of less rigorous climatic conditions and easier availability of stone and water, the rulers found it more practical to favour the construction of temples in this region. Consequently, we find a comparatively larger number of temple sites in this region as compared to the sandy-arid zone, the important ones being Osia in Marwar, and Harṣanātha and Ābāneri in Jaipur region. The different qualities of stone used in the sculptures of these sites have also affected their life span. The stone available around the region of Marwar is sand-stone, which though easy to carve, cannot sustain the rigours of weather very long. On the other hand, the sand-stone of the temples at Ābāneri and Harṣanātha comprises a great amount of the gneissic element which is more durable than the stone used in some of the Vaiṣṇava temples at Osia, Kiraḍū and Buchkalā. This is the reason why the sculptures of the latter group of temples have shown signs of decay earlier than the former.

(ii) Aravalli range and the Hilly Region

The Aravalli region comprises the east of Sirohi, Abu, Udaipur, Chittor, Dungarpur, Banswara and Alwar. This region is marked by constant succession of hills and valleys, with occasional distant plains. The slopes and base of the mountains are clothed with fairly dense forests. All the hill ranges are intersected by numerous streams, which fertilize the land.

The Aravalli range has assumed diverse shapes at different places in this region. Its most elevated part is a cluster of hills known as *Arbuda* (Mount Abu) with its main peak at *Guru śikhara*. At Ekalinga, it is triangular in shape and so it is called *Trikūṭa*. It has assumed a fish-shape near Udaipur, and as such is known as *Machhalāmagrā*.⁵

The ranges of the Aravalli with their ravines, valleys and water streams provided shelter and natural security to the indigenous tribes and also to the early *Kṣatriya* settlers – the Mauryas and the Guhilas. This also made it possible for them to carve out independent

kingdoms for themselves in the early 7th century A.D., at Chittor and Āhaḍ respectively. It is this isolated location which provided natural security against invasions to the temples constructed at Nāgdā, Jagat, Tusa, Iswal, Dilwara, Achaleśvara, etc., while the temples in the plains of Osia, Harṣanātha, etc., became an easy prey to the Muslim invasions. Built during the 8th and 9th centuries A.D., the temples of this region have also suffered natural decay through the effects of the weather. On the other hand the temples at Tusa, Jagat, Nāgdā, etc., are still extant for two reasons : (a) they were built of the harder variety of stone easily available in this region and (b) they remained undisturbed from invasions.

(iii) Hadoti Plateau and the Eastern plains

The Eastern plain covers the area north-east, east and south-east of the Aravalli range. The western boundary is marked by the eastern edge of the Aravalli hills and extends to the north of Udaipur. The Hadoti plateau – Bundi, Kota and Jhālāwar covers the eastern part along the Chambal river, south-east of the Mewar plains. The greater part of this area is drained by the river Chambal and its right-bank tributaries like Kali Sindh, Parwan and Parbati.⁶

The rivers Chambal, Banas, Mahi and their tributaries have made the region fertile and prosperous. Besides, the inter-state trade routes connecting Delhi, Gujarat and Malwa passed through this region,⁷ and brought its inhabitants in touch with the other parts of the country. This resulted in the assimilation of the traditions of the other parts of India into the sculptural representation of this region. The prosperity of the region made the life of the people easy and comfortable, and provided them with more leisure. They were able to divert their energies to religious pursuits and the building of the residences of gods. They gave vent to their feelings by developing the temple-sites at Bādoli and Chandravatī on the banks of the river Chambal and Chandrabhāgā respectively. Besides, the temples also grew in the remote areas such as at Atrū, Vilās, Mukandarā, Bijolian, etc. The easy access to the hard quality of stone added to the growth and life of the temples.

II

Historical Background of the Gurjaradesa

Rajasthan formed a part of Gurjaradeśa during the 8th and 10th centuries. Gurjaradeśa was then also known as the Gurjarabhūmi or Gurjaratrā. It was a complete political unit comprising the modern states of Gujarat, Rajasthan and parts of Madhya Pradesh. The rulers and people of this vast region were known as the Gurjaras.⁸ The homogeneity of the people, speaking a common language and having similar social and religious institutions, is reflected by the similarity of traditions in the sculptures of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, with minor variations due to local proclivities. Besides, the tolerant attitude of the rulers and their patronage not only facilitated the building of the temples but also kept them intact during the times of war.⁹ This is evident by the fact that despite their struggle for the hegemony of India, the Rāṣṭrakūṭas and the Pratihāras did not resort to the destruction of temples; rather at times they sumptuously donated to them as they cherished common religious traditions and heritage.

In the 7th and 8th centuries the Gurjaradeśa was divided into small states ruled by independent and semi-independent rulers. Among its territories in Rajasthan, Marwar was in the hands of the Pratihāras,¹⁰ Udaipur (Mewar) was ruled by the Guhilaputras,¹¹ Chittor¹² and Kota¹³ were governed by the Mauryas, Jhālarāpāṭan was held by Durgagaṇa¹⁴ and Sapādalakṣa (present Sambhar and Sikar) was under the Chāhamānas.¹⁵ The region of Baroach (modern Gujarat) was under the control of Bhartrivaddha II, a Chāhamāna feudatory of Nāgabhaṭṭa I,¹⁶ Sārasvata Maṇḍala and Satyapura Maṇḍala were occupied by Mūlarāja, a Chālukya feudatory and Malwa was under the sway of the Paramāras.¹⁷

Imperial Pratihara Rulers of Gurjaradesa

The history of the 7th and 8th centuries of these rulers is incomplete and scattered. Even then on the basis of the scattered literary, epigraphic and archaeological sources,¹⁸ it is ascertained

that in the later part of the 8th and 9th centuries A.D., one branch of the Gurjara-Pratihāras was ruling at Jābālipur (Jalore). From the *Kuvalayamāla* which was completed in 778 A.D.,¹⁹ it is evident that Vatsarāja, a ruler of this branch was ruling at Jalore. The inscription from Osia²⁰ and the Daulatpura Copper plate grant²¹ also refer to Vatsarāja as a supreme ruler of Gurjaradeśa.

From their capital of Jābālipur, the rulers of this dynasty had risen to power and brought the whole province of Gurjaradeśa under their sway.²² They made independent rulers of Malwa and Rajasthan their feudatories.²³ Ultimately, they shifted their capital to Kanauja, leaving the region of Marwar in the hands of their own kith and kin. They were known as the Imperial Pratihāras.

(a) *Gurjara-Pratihāras of Marwar* : The inscriptions of the Gurjara-Pratihāra rulers discovered at Jodhpur²⁴ and Ghaṭiyāla²⁵ in Marwar refer to another branch of the Pratihāras, who governed the region of Marwar as the feudatories of the Imperial Pratihāras ruling in Kanauja during the 8th and 10th centuries A.D. This branch of the Pratihāras was also known as the Gurjara-Pratihāras as they were the rulers of Marwar, a part of Gurjaradeśa.²⁶ A number of inscriptions also state that the territory of the Gurjara-Pratihāra rulers comprised *Deṇḍavānakaviṣaya* (Didwānā),²⁷ *Māṇḍavyapura* (Maṇḍor), *Meḍāntakapura* (Meḍatā), *Valla maṇḍala*²⁸ (Jaisalmer area) and Bhīnmāla.²⁹ Maṇḍor, Meḍatā and Bhīnmāla were the capital cities of the rulers of this dynasty.

The epigraphical evidences confirm that the feudatories of the Imperial Pratihāras of Kanauja had direct connections with their homeland of Marwar. Among these rulers, Kakka (ca. 800 A.D.) fought as a feudatory of Nāgabhaṭṭa II of the Imperial dynasty of Kanauja.³⁰ Buchkalā, which is situated near Jodhpur (Maṇḍor), is referred to as Nāgabhaṭṭa II's own land (*Svaviṣaya*).³¹ At this time the Pratihāra Bāuka was ruling at Maṇḍor. The copper-plate grant of Bhoja (844 A.D.),³² the son of Nāgabhaṭṭa II refers to a grant for the village Sīvā (in Dīdwānā) by the Imperial Pratihāra Vatsarāja. The grant of this village fell into abeyance during the reign of Rāmabhadra (833-36 A.D.). Bhoja, the successor

of Rāmabhadra renewed this grant. This shows that the reign of Marwar was under the control of the Imperial Pratihāras, and the Gurjara-Pratihāras were their feudatories.

Under the patronage of these rulers, the cities of Osia, Bhīnmāla, Rohinsakūpa, Kirāḍū, Maṇḍor, etc., in Marwar became thriving centres of art and culture. This could be inferred from the inscriptional and archaeological evidences, as well as from the descriptions of Ywān Chwāng. The *Kuvalayamāla* also mentions the visit of one Śiva Chandra Gaṇi and his disciples to Bhīnmāla, who beautified the Gurjaradeśa with temples.³³ During the reign of Vatsarāja, the city of Upakeśapura³⁴ (Osia) developed as a place of pilgrimage. Similarly, the cities of Maṇḍor and Rohinsakūpa (Ghaṭiyāla) became famous centres of art at that time. Moreover, it was due to the royal patronage that despite the adverse conditions of the desert, the temple cities of Osia, Bhīnmāla and Kirāḍū could be built.

The religious beliefs and the tolerant attitude of the Pratihāra rulers also encouraged every sect to build temples in their dominion. They were themselves devotees of different deities.³⁵ Vatsarāja is described as the devout worshipper of Śiva, while Nāgabhaṭṭa, Bhoja and Mahendrapāla were the *Parama-Bhagavatī-bhakta* or devout worshippers of goddess Bhagavatī, who may be Durgā or Lakṣmī. Rāmabhadra and Mahipāla of this dynasty were devout worshippers of Sūrya. Despite their being followers of different sects, they extended patronage to all. Therefore, along with Hinduism, Jainism also received their patronage. While building the pillar with the images of Gaṇapati at Ghaṭiyāla, in 861 A.D., Kakkuka, the Pratihāra ruler of Maṇḍor, also gave donations for the building of a temple of Mahāvīra there.³⁶

(b) *Chāhamānas of Śakambhari* : The Chāhamānas of Sapādalakṣa were also the feudatories of the Imperial Pratihāras. The capital city of the Chāhamānas was Śakambhari (Sāmbhar). According to the inscription of V.S. 1030 (973 A.D.)³⁷ of Vighraha Rāja Chauhāna, discovered at Harṣagiri (Sikar), Gūvaka I (815

A.D.) of this line was a feudatory of the Imperial Pratihāra, Nāgabhaṭṭa II (795 A.D. – 833 A.D.). Gūvaka I is described as a warrior of great repute, who achieved fame at the court of Nāgabhaṭṭa II.³⁸ The Pratāpgarh inscription of Mahendra Pāla (V.S. 1003–946 A.D.)³⁹ mentions that with the help of the Chāhamāna family, Bhoja had attained a high position. On seeing the Imperial Pratihāra ruler engaged in defending his kingdom from the Rāṣṭrakūṭa invasion, Vakpati Rāja of the Chauhāna dynasty overthrew his allegiance and became independent.⁴⁰ Even the successive wars of the Imperial Pratihāras for the hegemony of India, did not affect the internal economy of Śākambhari as they were not fought on this part of the land.

This favourable political condition induced the people of this region to devote their minds to higher things in life. Śaivism found its great patrons among the Chauhāna rulers as Śiva was their tutelary deity.⁴¹ Consequently, under their patronage the Śaiva devotees built the magnificent Śiva temple of Harṣanātha on the steep-hillock at Sikar. Both the people and the Chauhāna rulers profusely donated for its construction, and the sculptors found full opportunity to give expression to the religious traditions of the period. Besides, the Chauhāna rulers, Vākpati and Simharāja built temples of Śiva at Pushkara.⁴² They were liberal rulers and, therefore, extended patronage to the other sects. Simharāja also built a temple of *Raṇṇāditya* or Sūrya near Pushkara.⁴³ The Jaina devotees too enjoyed the royal patronage and donations from these rulers. The Chauhānas of the Nadol branch donated freely to the Jaina temples, although they were themselves devout worshippers of Sūrya, Śiva, Viṣṇu or Śakti.⁴⁴

(c) *Bar-Gujar chiefs of Rājyapura* : Among the other Chauhāna feudatories the Bargujar chiefs of Rājyapura (in Alwar) belonged to the family of the Imperial Pratihāras. Their acceptance of the suzerainty of the Imperial Pratihāras was nominal. For instance, the Bargujar chief Mathanadeva assumed the sovereign titles of '*Maharājādhirāja*' and *Paramēśvara*.

The Bargujar chiefs – Sāvata (V.S. 979)⁴⁵ and his son Mathanadeva (V.S. 1016)⁴⁶ – were devotees of Śiva and built the

temple city of Rājyapura now known as Parānagar, where Jainism and Hinduism flourished side by side. On the one side, Sāvata donated for the consecration of the image of Śāntinātha whereas Mathanadeva (1016 V.S.) granted villages for the maintenance of the temple of Nilakantha. This indicates their tolerant attitude towards all religions.

(d) *Guhilaputras of Medapāṭa* : In Rajasthan, the area of the southern side of the Arāvalli was known as *Medapāṭa*. The Guhilaputras played a significant role in this region although the history of the early Guhilas is shrouded in mystery. The whole of the south-west of Mewar was a part of their dominion. They recognized the suzerainty of the Pratihāras for sometime.⁴⁷ Around 953 A.D., during the reign of Allāṭa when the Pratihāra power declined, the Guhilas assumed independence.⁴⁸ They did not have any fear from the Rāṣṭrakūṭas too, as they were in matrimonial alliance with them.⁴⁹

The extant epigraphical records and sculptural wealth of Mewar prove that both the rulers and the people of this region were lovers of arts. They gave liberal donations for the temples. Added to this, the peaceful administration gave impetus to the building of the temples in the region. There are many examples of huge edifices which were built with the donations of the people. An inscription dated 718 V.S. (660-61 A.D.) of the reign of Aparājita⁵⁰ records that the wife of his general Varāha Simha built the temple of Viṣṇu. The cumulative result of these factors was that in *Medapāṭa* temples were built not only at its capital cities of Āhaḍ, Nāgdā and Chittor but also in its remote areas.

The inscription of Allāṭa (V.S. 1010), found at the Sārṇeśvara temple at Āhaḍ, shows the favourable political, social and economic conditions in which the temples were constructed. It mentions the names of the *goṣṭhikās* and the officials of the court who financed the building of the temples of Viṣṇu at Āhaḍ. The financial prosperity of Mewar also geared up the temple-building activities. The merchants from Karnāṭaka, Madhyadeśa, Lāṭa and Ṭakkadeśa thronged to Āhaḍ to buy and sell goods. Taxes

collected from them were assigned for the maintenance of the temples.⁵¹ These merchants who were the carriers of the religious traditions and culture of South India, influenced the beliefs of the people in this region, the impact of which is visible in the Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva images of this period in Rajasthan.

Under the patronage of the Guhilas, Vaiṣṇavism found a new impetus in Mewar. The temples of Ādivarāha at Āhaḍ and Gangodbheda, and the Vaiṣṇava temples at Nāgdā and Chittor were built during the reign of the Guhilas. These examples are enough to indicate the height of the cultural development which Mewar reached due to favourable political factors.

Impact of the Invasions of the Rastrakutas

During their struggle for the Imperial power with the Pratihāras, the armies of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas invaded many parts of this region, and even traversed through it at times. For instance, in 789 A.D., the army of the Rāṣṭrakūṭa ruler Dhruva marched upto Marwar and forced the Pratihāra ruler, Vatsarāja, to take refuge there.⁵² Such expeditions of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas adversely affected the economy of Rajasthan, but they did not hamper the temple building activity there. Thus even during the period of the expeditions via Chittor of Govind III (806-07 A.D.),⁵³ and Kṛiṣṇa III (940 A.D.),⁵⁴ via Chittor, Mālwa and Gurjaratrā, many temples were built and planned. For instance, despite invasions the temples of Osia (Jodhpur) were built during the 8th-10th centuries A.D., Buchkalā in 815 A.D., Harṣanātha (Sikar) was completed in 956 A.D., the Nīlakanṭha temple at Parānagar was completed sometime before 959 A.D.; the Ambikā temple at Jagat (Udaipur) was built about the middle of the 10th century A.D. The Vaiṣṇava (ca. 8th century A.D.) and the Sūrya temples (770 V.S.—723 A.D.) at Chittor, and the Vaiṣṇava temples at Nāgdā and Āhaḍ were completed around the 10th century A.D. The inscription of Ādivarāha (V.S. 1001), Allāṭa (V.S. 1010), Mahendrapāla (V.S. 1003), and Ekalinga (V.S. 1028) are enough to indicate that these expeditions did not hamper the temple building activity in Mewar.

These temples were built and could remain intact in the throes of the struggle because of a number of reasons. The

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expeditions of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas were of the *digvijaya* type. The struggle remained confined to the rulers for political hegemony of India; and therefore, the people were not harassed nor were the temples destroyed in conformity with the ethics of war.⁵⁵ For instance, the armies of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas frequently marched through Mewar, but they never destroyed the cities or temples of this area. The records of the Pratihāras and the Rāṣṭrakūṭas also do not speak of this sort of vandalism in any part of Gurjaradeśa. In 754 A.D., the Rāṣṭrakūṭa ruler, Dantidurga performed the ceremony of the *Hiranyagarbha Mahādāna* at Ujjayini,⁵⁶ declaring his supremacy over the rulers. Thus the expeditions of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas adversely affected the economy of the region but did not obstruct the building of the temples by the people and the feudatories of the Pratihāras.

Moreover, the common religious heritage and traditions of the Pratihāras and Rāṣṭrakūṭas also contributed to this liberal attitude of the Rāṣṭrakūṭas. The Rāṣṭrakūṭas were themselves worshippers of Śiva and Viṣṇu and the builders of great edifices like the Kailāśa temple at Ellora.⁵⁷ Therefore, from their political connections Rajasthan was benefited more culturally than otherwise. Some of the sculptural representations on the lines of the South Indian traditions could be seen in the temples of Marwar, Jhālarāpāṭan, Sikar, etc. The rare images of *Lingodbhava-mūrti*, *Nṛsiṃha*, *Yogīśvara*, *Śeṣaśāyī* Viṣṇu, etc., carved in many of the temples of Rajasthan, are based on the literary descriptions of the South Indian texts. These images can only be understood in the light of the cultural contacts made with the merchants through trade and with the Rāṣṭrakūṭas and the Pratihāras through war.

III

Religious Traditions

The prevalent religions have also influenced the building of temples and carving of sculptures during the period. At this time, Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism were the two main religious traditions prevalent in Rajasthan. This is evident from the number of extant Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava temples and images. In Kota, Jhalawar, Bijolian, Sikar, Alwar and Bharatpur, Śaivism was the main religion

of the people, while in Marwar and Mewar (Chittor, Nāgdā, Āhaḍ etc.) Vaiṣṇavism was more popular. In some parts of Rajasthan, the worship of the Sun and Śakti was also in vogue. Later on, the sun cult was merged in the Vaiṣṇava religion. For instance, in the temples of Sirohi, the worship of Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa or Viṣṇu had started.

The religious leanings and attitudes of the rulers also proved beneficial to the cause of religion. The Pratihāras and the Guhilas patronised Vaiṣṇavism. Some of the Guhila and Chauhāna rulers built temples of Śiva. The personal religious leanings of these rulers were not the only operative factors in building the temples. Of course, they extended patronage and gave donations to the temples of every sect, but the people and merchants equally showed enthusiasm in these sacred works.

The building and maintenance of the temples was the concern and responsibility of the entire community. Proper arrangements were made for this purpose. The ruler usually granted the revenue of the villages and fields in the name of God for the repair, whitewash and worship in the temple, while the people donated according to their profession in cash or kind. For instance, the chief of Rājyapura (Parānagar) donated the village of *Vyāghrapāṭaka* to the temple of Nīlakaṇṭha for meeting the expenses of bathing, unguents, flowers, incense, *naivedya*, lights, oils, whitewash, paying the labourers and gardeners etc.⁵⁸ The inscription from Kaman (Bharatpur) stipulates a permanent supply of 60 garlands per day by the florists of Kāmyakavana, of which 34 were to be supplied to the temple of Viṣṇu and 26 to the temple of Chāmunda.⁵⁹ Similarly, the gift of two *palikās* of oil for the perpetual lamp of the temple at Nadlai was made from each oil-machine of the village.⁶⁰ A committee of eleven bankers built a pavilion in front of the temple of Sakarāimātā.⁶¹

The management of collecting the taxes was entrusted to certain *goṣṭhikās*, which consisted of the elite of the community. They looked after the proper utilisation of the donations, maintenance, repair and worship in the temples. For instance, the *goṣṭhikās*

of Kāmyakavana (Kaman) were the trustees of the Śaiva temples and responsible for other building activity such as the excavation of a step-well associated with the temple. Though these *goṣṭhikas* were devoted to Śiva, they were also placed in charge of the shrines of Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Chāmunda there.⁶² Similarly, the *goṣṭhikas* at Āhaḍ (Mewar) collected taxes for the maintenance of the temple of Ādivarāha there.⁶³ The taxes were imposed on the sale of goods, animals, etc. The inscription from Bayana tells us that for the establishment of the temple, besides the revenue of the two villages, one *dramma* was collected from the sale of every horse, and was utilized for the maintenance of the deity.⁶⁴

Śaiva *āchāryas* and ascetics were also made responsible for the building and the upkeep of the temples. The Śaiva *āchāryas* of the monastery of *Harṣagiri* built the Śiva temple there with the donations of the rulers and people. This responsibility was inherited from the teacher by the disciples of the same line of the *āchāryas*.⁶⁵ According to the Kaman inscription a sum was made over to a Śaiva teacher for the maintenance of the Śaiva temple there. These *āchāryas* not only looked after the Śaiva temples but also the other temples of that place. The Śaiva *āchāryas* of the Kāmyakeśvara temple were also incharge of the temples of Viṣṇu and Chāmunda at Kaman. Similarly, the monastery of Hari-Riśīśvara at Daśapura (Mandasor) managed the temples of Vaṭayakṣiṇī, Indrāditya and Trailokya-mohana at the village of Ghonṭavārṣika in Pratapgarrh.⁶⁶

The spirit of tolerance and understanding that all gods are the different manifestations of the same god, who may be worshipped as Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva, Śakti or Sūrya, helped in the growth of all the religions in this period. As a result of this, Rīṣabha and Buddha were also considered as the manifestations of Viṣṇu like the other incarnations. Moreover, the tradition of carving the composite images of different divinities as the images of Harihara, Ardhanārīśvara, Sūrya-Narāyaṇa, Mārtaṇḍa-Bhairava; and the composite forms of Sūrya, Śiva, Brahmā and Viṣṇu in one image was the result of religious tolerance and harmony prevalent during this period.

Vaiṣṇavism

In Rajasthan, temples of Viṣṇu have been discovered mainly in the region of Mewar. Here the images of Yogeśvara, Viṣṇu and Śeṣaśāyī were worshipped and carved, though their iconographical references occur frequently with details in the South Indian texts. Among the incarnations of Viṣṇu – Varāha, Trivikrama and Narasimha were frequently carved in the temples of Rajasthan. The images representing Vaikuṇṭha or Viśvarūpa aspect have also been discovered from the regions of Kota and Jhalawar. The temples of Varāha were also constructed as is recorded in the inscription of Allāṭa (V.S. 1010). The sculptures of Kriṣṇa found a place only on the exterior of the temples. The other incarnations such as Rāma, Paraśurāma, Buddha and Kalki were not ignored, but they were not given much importance in sculptural representation. They were only carved on the stereotyped panels of the *daśāvatāras*. The representation of the *Āyudha puruṣas* of Viṣṇu and Śiva continued in this period.

Saivism

Śaivism was most popular with the Chauhānas as Śiva was their tutelary deity. The devotees of Śiva styled themselves as *Parama māheśvaras*. The main object of their worship was the *Lingam*, which was represented in various forms. Sometimes, it was a *mukhalinga*, bearing similar faces representing the different aspects of Śiva; and at other times, it contained figures of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Sūrya and Rudra representing the synthesis of all these sects.

The regions of Kota, Jhalawar, Sikar, Paranagar and Bharatpur were the strongholds of Śaivism. The Śaiva teachers Viśvarūpa and Bhāvadyota at Sikar and Iśānājamu at the bank of the river Chandrabhāgā (in Chandrāvati, Jhalawar) professed the Pāśupata cult.

Saktism

The worship of Śakti was only a little less widespread in Rajasthan. Some of the Chauhāna rulers were also devotees of

Śakti. The concept of mother-goddess being the earliest in religion, the worship of Śakti was not confined only to one sect. The Jains also worshipped goddess Chāṇḍikā as their tutelary goddess by turning her into a vegetarian goddess and naming her as Sachchikā. In Rajasthan, *tāntric* practices were also prevalent specially at Jhālarāpāṭan. Therefore, the goddess was worshipped in her terrific aspect and was offered wine and animal sacrifices.⁶⁷

Besides, Durgā, Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī, representing the pacific aspects of the goddess, were also worshipped. The Mahiṣamardini aspect of the goddess was glorified by building exclusive temples of the goddess at Unwas and Jagat.

Surya Worship

The prevalence of the worship of the Sun in Rajasthan was undoubtedly due to the impact of foreign influence. Bhīnmāla was the centre of Sun worship. But during the 10th century A.D., the sun cult was merged with the Vaiṣṇava cult. This can be seen from the presence of the images of Sūrya-Nārāyaṇa or many other Vaiṣṇava images in the temples of Sun. When sun worship declined, in some temples the image of the Sun was replaced by that of Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa or some composite form of Sūrya, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. Other gods such as Brahmā, Gaṇeśa, Dikpālas and Navagrahas were represented on the exterior of the temples of this period.

The temple sites in Rajasthan clearly reveal that geographical and historical factors and the religious beliefs of the people have played an important role in the construction, preservation and maintenance of the temples in Rajasthan. The geographical conditions of Rajasthan have facilitated the preservation of the temples. The life span of the temples and the finesse of their carvings could be attributed to the good quality of the stone while the natural hilly surroundings gave protection against the Muslim invaders. Moreover, the religious leanings of the people and of the rulers encouraged the building of temples in this region during the period of this study. Donations for the building and maintenance of temples were made by both, the rulers and the people from all

walks of life. Even the invaders, who were Hindus did not hamper the building of temples but donated liberally for the temples on the dominions of their rivals. Jainism and Vaiṣṇavism were the dominant religions of the people though other deities like the sun and Śakti were also worshipped. Hence we find a greater number of Śiva and Viṣṇu temples than those of Śakti or the Sun.

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28. R.C. Majumdar, *op. cit.*, pp. 95. vs. 10, 12, and 18.
29. Munshi, *op. cit.*, p. 31.
30. R.C. Majumdar, *op. cit.*, vs. 24; See also, V.B. Misra, *op. cit.*, pp. 6-7.
31. D.R. Bhandarkar, "Buchkala Inscription of Nāgabhaṭṭa, Samvat 872", *EI*, IX, pp. 198-200.
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34. "Inscription from Osia", *JRAS*, 1907, p. 1010; Nahar, *op. cit.*, Inscription No. 788, vs. 9.
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- ✓ 37. F. Kielhorn, "Harṣa Stone Inscription of Chāhamāna Vigharāja II, V.S. 1030=973 A.D.", *EI*, II, pp. 116-30.
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39. G.H. Ojha, Partabgarh Inscription of the time of the Pratihāra king Mahendrapāla II of Mahodaya, Samvat 1003", *EI*, XIV, vs. 5. "Yenochchaiḥ sukhamāsitaṁ kṣitibhritā Śrībhōjadevena".
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41. Kielhorn, *op. cit.*, vs. 27.
42. *Prithvīrājaviṣaya*, V, vs. 43 and 45; Quoted from Dasharatha Sharma, *op. cit.*, pp. 28 and 230.
43. Dasharatha Sharma, "Mahārājādhirāja Simharāja aur Uskā Thānwale kā Abhilekha", (Hindi), *Varadā*, V, (2), 1962, pp. 2-7.
- ✓ 44. D.R. Bhandarkar, "The Chāhamānas of Marwar", *EI*, XI, pp. 26-79.
45. *IAR*, 1961-62, p. 85.
46. F. Kielhorn, "Rajor Inscription of Mathanadeva V.S. 1016", *EI*, III, pp. 263-266.
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48. R.R. Haldar, "An Inscription of the time of Allāṭa of Mewar, V.S. 1010", *Indian Antiquary*, LVIII, 1929, Bombay, pp. 161-62.
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54. *Ibid.*, p. 113; R.G. Bhandarkar, "Karhad Plates of Krishna III, Śaka Samvat 880", *EI*, IV, pp. 278-290, vs. 30; R.G. Bhandarkar, Deoli Plates of Krishnaraja III, Śaka Samvat 862", *EI*, V, pp. 188-197, vs. 25; See also, V.B. Misra, *op. cit.*, pp. 40-41.
55. Medhātithi, Commentary on *Manu Smṛiti*, VII, vs. 201-202.

56. D.R. Bhandarkar, "The Sanjan Plates of Amoghavarṣa I; Śaka Samvat 793", *EI*, XVIII, pp. 243, 257, vs. 9.
57. F. Kielhorn, *EI*, VII, Appendix, p. 13; *Archaeological Survey of Western India*, Vol. V, p. 87.
58. F. Kielhorn, "Rajor Inscription of Mathanadeva, V.S. 1016", *EI*, III, pp. 263-267.
59. D.C. Sircar, "Three Inscriptions from Rajasthan", *EI*, XXXVI, p. 53.
60. D.R. Bhandarkar, "The Chāhamānas of Marwar", *EI*, XI, p. 34.
61. B. Ch. Chabra, "Sakarai Stone Inscription 699 V.S.", *EI*, XXVII, p. 32. ✓
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64. R.D. Banerjee, "The Bayānā Inscription of Chitrālekḥā, V.S. 1012", *EI*, XXII, pp. 120-27. ✓
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66. G.H. Ojha, "Partabgarh Inscription of the time of the Pratihāra Mahendrapāla II of Mahodaya Samvat 1003", *EI*, XIV, pp. 176-186. ✓
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2

Main Centres
of the
Temple Sites

The important role played by religion in the life of the people during the post-Gupta period in Rajasthan is attested by the temples strewn all over the region. The main existing temple-sites of that period in Rajasthan are Osia, Buchkalā and Kirāḍū in Jodhpur (Marwar); Chittorgarh, Kalyānpur, Āhaḍ, Unwās, Jagat, Nāgdā, Īswāl and Tūsa in Udaipur (Mewar); Chandrabhāgā and Jhālarāpātan in Jhalawar; Bāḍoli, Kansua, Chārchomā, Vilās, Atrū and Ramgarh in Kota; Ābānerī and Harṣanātha in Jaipur, and Parānagar in Alwar. Some of them were places of pilgrimage for every sect, while the others remained predominant only for one or two sects in a specific period. For instance, Osia was a centre of Vaiṣṇava, Saura, Śaiva and Śākta devotees in ca. 8th and 9th centuries A.D., but it turned into a place of pilgrimage for the Jains when all the inhabitants were converted to Jainism.¹ However, this sort of proselytisation was not a general phenomenon in all the temple-cities, because with the growth of Jainism all the Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva or Śākta devotees did not embrace it. Consequently, on the construction of a Jaina temple, the earlier Hindu temples continued to be the places of regular worship. For instance, when Jainism became predominant at Parānagar (Alwar), the temple of Tīrthaṅkara was built, but the earlier Hindu temple of Nīlakaṇṭha Śiva continued to be in regular worship. At Chittorgarh, the Vaiṣṇava, the Śaiva and the Saura temples remained places of pilgrimage and worship side by side with the Jaina temples. Similar was the situation at the temple sites of Nāgdā, Chandrabhāgā, etc. In contrast to this, the temple sites of Bāḍolī, Jagat, etc., continued to be the strongholds of Hinduism; the former being the centre of Śiva, Śakti and Viṣṇu temples; while the latter was only that of Śakti. These temple-cities could be considered as the representative examples of the harmonious community life which the followers of the different sects were leading during the post-Gupta period in Rajasthan.

I

Jodhpur (Marwar)

In the region of Jodhpur (Marwar) Vaiṣṇava and Saura cults were prevalent mainly during the 8th and 9th centuries, though in this very region the existence and prevalence of the former could

be traced back to the Gupta period. The earliest evidence of a Vaiṣṇava temple at Maṇḍor, probably of the Gupta period, are two pillars, which are the parts of a *torana* of the temple. Scenes from the life of Kṛiṣṇa are carved on these pillars.²

Besides these pillars the Hindu and the Jaina temples of Osia,³ the temples of Buchkalā⁴ and Kirāḍū are some of the striking examples of the contribution of Marwar in the field of sculpture and iconography.

Osia

Osia is situated 36 miles south-west of Jodhpur. In ancient times it was known as Upakeśapur or Ukeśa.⁵ Between the 8th and 9th centuries it was the main centre for the Hindu devotees as is evident from the existing Vaiṣṇava, Saura and Śakta temples. Subsequently, even on its becoming a Jaina stronghold,⁶ Osia continued to be a centre of attraction for the Hindus because of the temple of Sachiyāmātā, which was a transformation of Mahiṣamardini. Today, Osia is a place of pilgrimage for the Jains as well as the Hindus. The extant temples as well as the descriptions of the town in the epigraphs and literature are enough to testify that it was a big and prosperous city in the ancient times. Local traditions also confirm this view. The city extended upto Mathāniā (16 miles from Osia) on one side, Tivari (13 miles from Osia) and Ghaṭiyālā on the other.⁷ Ghaṭiyālā (13 miles from Osia), the ancient Rohinsakūpa⁸ was its principal gateway, while Mathāniā was its grain-market, and Tivari was its oilmen's quarters.⁹

The temples of Osia could be divided in two groups—(i) the earlier Vaiṣṇava and the Saura temples which are situated at the outskirts of the village; and (ii) the temples situated on the hill.

(i) *Vaiṣṇava temples* : The earliest among the Vaiṣṇava temples are the three shrines, which have been called as the Harihara temples (Nos. 1-3) by Bhandarkar. Two of them are of the *pañchāyatana* type i.e., they consist of a large central shrine surrounded by four smaller shrines dedicated to other gods. The third one is of the *ekāyatana* design having only one shrine,

consisting of a sanctum, a domed *sabhāmaṇḍapa*, and a porch. All the three temples are built on a raised plinth with a porch on the stairs. These temples and their subsidiary shrines are without any image in the sanctum.

Bhandarkar and some other scholars have assigned these temples to Harihara on the basis of the latter being enshrined, in their back principal niche. This view does not appear convincing on the grounds that it is not only the principal back niche but also the dedicatory block, the *lalāṭabimba*, which is a factor that counts in deciding the principal deity of a temple. It was a general practice to carve the image of the main deity on the *lalāṭabimba* or on the lintel of the doorway of the sanctum. If the temples have been dedicated to Harihara, a proper balance would have been maintained in selecting the themes for the decoration of their exterior. Therefore, they could be ascribed to Viṣṇu and not to Harihara on the basis of the following reasons.

First, the exterior of the sanctums of these temples is adorned by Vaiṣṇava images. The incarnations of Viṣṇu in the principal niches of the exterior of the sanctum, and scenes from the life of Kṛiṣṇa on the cornice recess, form the main themes of depiction in these temples. Secondly, the door jambs are decorated with a *nāgavallī* design and arranged in such a manner so that they cover the whole moulding with intricate coils of serpents. The tails of these serpents are being held by Garuḍa. Thirdly, a figure of Viṣṇu seated on Garuḍa is carved on the lintel of the doorway of the sanctum. Moreover, the image of Garuḍa is also carved on the pedestal of the principal image which is still *in situ* in the sanctum. Fourthly, the *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* prescribes that the sign of the deity, the weapon and the vehicle of the god should be used as his symbol; and one of these should be made on the *āmalasāraka*.¹⁰ Besides, in this temple a figure of the discus is also carved on the front of the *śikhara*¹¹ which clearly confirms that it was dedicated to Viṣṇu.

According to the tradition of the *pañchāyatana pūjā* Viṣṇu, Śiva, Sūrya, Śakti and Gaṇeśa are the five deities, who are worshipped in this type of temple. From the ruins of the extant subsidiary

shrines of the temples containing the sculptures of Śiva, Śakti and Sūrya, it can be safely concluded that the principal deity of this *pañchāyatana* temple must have been Viṣṇu. In the subsidiary shrine of Śiva, the rarely represented theme of the marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī is also carved.

The second temple (Harihara No. 2) has also been wrongly stated by Bhandarkar to be that of Harihara.¹² As it is similar to the first temple (No. 1), in plan, style and delineation we can safely conclude that the second temple was of Viṣṇu. The subsidiary shrines of this temple are damaged. In comparison with the first temple (No. 1), this temple shows a transitory stage in the development of motifs. It is characterised both by the emergence of certain new motifs and modification in others. Besides, all the sculptures of its images are rather elongated, and are vigorous and delicate in depiction. The representation of the themes of Narasimha and Harihara is also more elaborate. In view of these developments, it could be inferred that this temple was built subsequent to temple No. 1.

The third temple, which has also been ascribed to Harihara (No. 3) by Bhandarkar, is of the *ekāyatana* type, i.e., it consists of a single shrine and a domed *sabhāmaṇḍapa*.

All these temples at Osia are important for their contribution to the iconography of the images. On the base of temple No. 1, an image of Buddha is carved in a separate niche. This suggests that around the 8th century A.D., the image of Buddha was begun to be regarded as an incarnation in Hinduism, and was given an important and separate place in the temple. Besides, the depiction of the rarely represented theme of the marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī on a subsidiary shrine of Śiva and that of *Śringār Durgā*, on the shrine of Śakti are assets to the sculpture of Rajasthan.

(ii) *Temple of Sun* : A few yards away from the Vaiṣṇava temples, is the Sun temple.¹³ It contains a sanctum, an *antarāla*, an open *pradakṣiṇā patha*, a *sabhāmaṇḍapa* and a portico. It appears to be of the *pañchāyatana* type. The four subsidiary shrines

were originally connected by a cloister which served the purpose of a compound wall for the temple and court-yard.

There is no image in the sanctum of this temple. There are varied sort of sculptures on the lintel, backniche and the exterior of the sanctum. The lintel of the door-frame shows a figure of Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa on the central block flanked by Gaṇeśa, Brahmā, Kubera and Śiva. The principal niches on the exterior of the shrine are enshrined with the figures of Maḥiṣamardini, Sūrya and Gaṇeśa. With the exception of Sūrya, all the other images indicate Śaiva or Vaiṣṇava affiliation. The varying combinations, as of Balarāma and Viṣṇu on the pilasters of the doorway, Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa, Śiva and Gaṇeśa on the lintel and Narasimha, Sūrya, Maḥiṣamardini and Gaṇeśa on the exterior of the sanctum make it difficult to form any definite opinion about the main deity of the temple.

(iii) *Temples dedicated to Śakti* : At Osia the temples dedicated to Śakti are famous by the name of (A) Piplāmātā and (B) Sachiyāmātā.

(A) Piplāmātā temple : The temple of Piplāmātā¹⁴ is near the Sun temple. It is built on a decorated terrace. Originally, it consisted of a sanctum, a *sabhāmaṇḍapa* and a porch. It does not appear to have any subsidiary shrine. The larger portion of this temple has been destroyed. The life-size images of Maḥiṣamardini flanked by Kubera and Gaṇeśa are enshrined on a dais in the sanctum.

In the exterior of the Piplāmātā temple are the images of Maḥiṣamardini and Gaḥalakṣmī. The principal niche at the back wall is empty, but there can be no doubt that originally it had an image of Maḥiṣamardini or Kṣemaṅkari.¹⁵

(B) The Temple of Sachiyāmātā : The temple dedicated to Sachiyāmātā or *Sachchikā* i.e., Maḥiṣamardini, is situated on a hill. It is surrounded by a group of small Vaiṣṇava shrines. In Marwar, it is regarded as a sacred place both by the Hindus and the Jains after the transformation of Maḥiṣamardini as Sachchikā.

The temple faces the west and consists of a shrine, a circumambulatory passage, an assembly hall and a porch. The dome of the *sabhāmaṇḍapa* stands on eight big octagonal pillars as is seen in the temples of the 11th century A.D., in Rajasthan. On the basis of the carvings it appears that the base of the temple is of an earlier period. That the reconstruction and renovation of the temple and *sabhāmaṇḍapa* took place in the 12th century A. D., is confirmed by the donatory inscriptions of many Brāhmaṇas which are engraved on the pillars.

Another inscription of V.S. 1234¹⁶ of the temple records that a banker Gayapāla of the *ghobadamṣu* family decorated the exterior of the sanctum (*jaṅghāgharam*) with the images of Chaṇḍikā, Śītalā, Sachchikā, Kṣemankarī and Kṣetrapāla. The extant images in the exterior of the sanctum do not fully corroborate this inscriptional evidence. Chaṇḍikā could be identified with the image of Chāmundā and Sachchikā with Mahiṣamardini¹⁷ which is carved in the back principal niche of the sanctum. On the northern side of the sanctum is an image of a *mātrikā* seated on an ass and holding a winnowing basket. This could be identified as Śītalā referred to in the inscription. Kṣetrapāla could be identified as Bhairava. The image of Kṣemankarī undoubtedly seems to have been enshrined in the sanctum as there is no empty niche in the exterior of the sanctum.¹⁸

(a) Around the temple of Sachiyāmātā there are many small shrines. Among them, one is dedicated to Viṣṇu. On the ceiling of its *sabhāmaṇḍapa* are carved two figures amidst the coils of serpents. One is a male figure playing on the flute, and the other a female holding a lotus flower. Bhandarkar believes the couple to be Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.¹⁹ This interpretation seems plausible because they could not be *nāga* figures as they are not carved with the serpent-hood.

In the exterior of the shrine are carved the images of Gaṇeśa and Sūrya. The image of Sūrya is placed in the principal back niche. The sculptures of Viṣṇu and Saṃkarṣaṇa are carved in the *maṇḍapa*; and that of Ardhanārīśvara and Gaṇeśa are embedded in the niches of the exterior wall of the sanctum. This

scheme of presentation resembles the depiction of gods and goddesses of the Sun temple of the village. It also shows that the Saura and Vaiṣṇava cults were synthesized in Osia. Similarly, the synthesis between Śiva and Viṣṇu had also been achieved in the Vaiṣṇava temples by the representation of the image of Harihara. This temple was also renovated as could be guessed from an image of a seated deity with a sevenhooded canopy. This canopy is probably of the Jaina Tīrthaṅkara Rīṣabhanātha which might have been installed at the time of renovation.

(b) Close to this, is another temple which also conforms to the tradition of synthesis between the Vaiṣṇava and Saura cults. On the *lalātabimba* of this temple, there is an image of Viṣṇu seated on Garuḍa, while on the exterior of the sanctum are carved a composite *trimūrti* figure of Śiva, Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Sūrya and other images of the incarnations of Viṣṇu.

(c) On the right side of the temple of Sachiyāmātā there are two smaller shrines, which are similar to each other in the delineation of the scheme of decoration, size and in the representation of the images. The central niches of their exteriors are adorned with Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa, Varāha and Narasimha. The image of the composite form of Harihara-Pitāmaha-Sūrya is also carved in both the temples.

Date of the temples at Osia : There is also a Jaina temple at the foot of the hill in Osia. It is dedicated to Mahāvīra and is in a good state of preservation. It is surrounded by a walled enclosure with a *maṇḍapa* on the staircase, locally known as a *nālamaṇḍapa*. In front of it is a decorated arch which bears an inscription. The main temple consists of a sanctum, a closed hall and an open porch and is surrounded by many small subsidiary shrines.

In the *nālamaṇḍapa of the temple*, the discovery of an inscription of V.S. 1013 (956 A.D.)²⁰ has helped Bhandarkar and other scholars²¹ in deciding the date of the temples at Osia. It records the renovation of the *nālamaṇḍapa* by a merchant Jindaka and mentions Ukeśa (Osia) as a prosperous city during the reign of

Vatsarāja (770–800 A.D.) of the Pratihāra dynasty.²² On the basis of this reference Bhandarkar has ascribed the construction of the Jaina temple to Vatsarāja. In view of this assumption, he assigns the Vaiṣṇava temples to the early 8th century A.D., and the temples of the Sun, Śakti and Śiva to the 9th century A.D. Agreeing with this view, G.H. Ojha²³ and other scholars state that this could further be confirmed by the style of the carvings of the Vaiṣṇava temples which seem to be of the early 8th century A.D., either in the early years of the rule of Vatsarāja or when his father Nāgabhaṭṭa I was ruling.²⁴ On the basis of a comparative study of the Vaiṣṇava temples, it could be added that the earliest temple at this site is the Vaiṣṇava temple No. 1, after which temple No. 2 and No. 3 were constructed. When Vatsarāja rehabilitated the city of Ukeśa (Osia) he also constructed a step-well (*baori*) which is still there in a dilapidated condition. The construction of the subsidiary shrines of the Jaina and Sachiyāmātā temples took place in the 10th century A.D., and were renovated in the 12th century A.D.²⁵

With the growth of Jainism at Osia, the Vaiṣṇava and Śakta temples were naturally neglected; consequently in course of time they fell into decay. However, the city continued to be prosperous as can be gathered from the description of the *Nabhinandana Jinoddhara Prabandha*²⁶ of Kakkasūri a work of 1339 A.D. It vividly describes the gardens, step-wells and magnificent buildings of the city.

Contribution to Sculpture

This site is significant from the point of view of tracing the genesis and development of the motifs and iconography for two reasons. One, it has some of the earliest temples of the region of Rajasthan, and two, these temples are of the long period between the 8th and 10th centuries during which temple-building was prevalent. Moreover, they help in the proper appreciation of the scheme of exterior decorations as well as the decoration of the door-frames²⁷ of a temple. They also help us in the proper understanding of the motifs and in assigning the dates of the temples.

The absence of the depiction of the theme of ten incarnations or *matrikas* on their door-frames indicate that this tradition

in sculpture was not introduced in the 8th century A.D., but in the 10th century A.D., as is evident from the Vaiṣṇava temple at Nāgda (c. 10th century A.D.). However, representations of the Trivikrama, Narasimha, Varāha and Buddha incarnations in separate niches show their popularity in sculptures of the 8th century A.D.

The scenes of *Kṛiṣṇa līlā* are depicted in great detail in sequence from the birth of Kṛiṣṇa to the exchange of the children, exploits of Kṛiṣṇa's early childhood and his fights in the court of Kamsa. These scenes are carved on the cornice in a long frieze around the *śikhara*, separating every scene with a pillar or tree.²⁸

Śaivism was not very popular at Osia as there is only one temple of Śiva. The images of Harihara in the earliest Vaiṣṇava temples also add to our knowledge of its iconography and show that the synthesis between the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava sects was achieved in the 8th century A.D.

In the earlier temples at Osia the representation of *Dikpālas* is also noteworthy for being represented only with two hands.²⁹ With the development in iconography, they began to be attributed four hands.

Buchkala

Buchkalā is situated about 32 miles from Jodhpur.³⁰ There are two temples, which are now in a dilapidated condition. They are locally known as the Pārvatī and Śiva temples, but originally they were dedicated to Viṣṇu and Pārvatī respectively.³¹ This is evident from the images of the principal back niches in the exterior of the sanctum.

The temple of Viṣṇu (Pārvatī Temple) is specially important for it preserves the dated inscription of V.S. 872 (815 A.D.) in the reign of Nāgabhaṭṭa II of the Imperial Pratihāra dynasty, which indicates that it was built in the early part of the 9th century A.D.³² On this basis, the temple of Pārvatī (Śiva temple) can also be ascribed to this period.

From the point of view of sculptural wealth neither of them is of much significance.

Kiradu

The ancient name of Kirādū, situated near Hāthma village, was Kirātakūpa. From the point of view of sculpture the remnants of the Śaiva temples here, are not as significant as those of Osia in the region of Marwar. Among these temples at Kirādū which have been assigned to the 11th century A.D.,³³ the Someśvara temple is the most preserved one. Its pillars are good examples of how sculpture had become completely subservient to architecture by the time of the construction of the temples at Kirādū. Though the carvings of the sculptures of the temples show a marked deterioration, in the field of narratives the scenes from the *Mahabhārata* and the *Rāmāyana* add to its sculptural wealth.³⁴ Kirādū became a centre of Jainism in the 13th and 14th centuries as is evident from the *Nābhinandana Jinoddhāra Prabandha*.³⁵

II

Udaipur (Mewar)

Like Marwar, the region of Mewar (Udaipur) was also full of sculptural wealth in Rajasthan. In Mewar, during the post-Gupta period the worship of Śakti was more prevalent than that of Viṣṇu and Śiva. The popularity of the Śakti cult is evident from the extant temples of mother-goddesses at Jagat and Unwās as well as from the loose sculptures of mother-goddesses found at various places in the region. In these temples, the Mahiṣamardini aspect of Durgā was glorified. Viṣṇu was specially worshipped as Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa and as the incarnation of Varāha. The temples of Śiva and Sūrya were also built but their number is very small.

Chittorgarh

The earliest of the Vaiṣṇava and Saura temples in Mewar were constructed at Chittorgarh. The fort of Chittor or Chitrakūṭa was a centre of temple building activity till the time of Rājā Kumbhā (1433-1468 A.D.). Here the earliest monuments of the 7th-8th century A.D.,³⁶ are two temples: (a) the *Kālikamātā* temple, which was originally a Sun temple, and (b) the Vaiṣṇava shrine, which is now known as the *Kumbhashyāma* temple.

(a) *Kalikāmātā temple* : The Kālikāmātā temple consists of a *pañcharatha* sanctum, a *maṇḍapa*, a closed *pradakṣiṇa* patha and a porch. The roof of these parts of the temple is reconstructed. The exterior of the sanctum represents in all the three main niches the images of the sun seated in a chariot;³⁷ while the other exterior niches depict minor gods like Chandra and the *Dikpālas*.

The door-frame of the sanctum is unique from the point of the carvings of the lintel and door jambs. The lintel represents Sūrya as the main deity flanked by many gods, who have been elaborately carved. The doorway depicts Gangā and Yamunā with attendants. The sculptures depicting Kūrma, the incarnation of Viṣṇu, Uma-Māheśvara and Lakuliṣa are examples of the early stages of their iconographic development, which attained maturity by the 10th century A.D. The temple can be assigned to the early 8th century A.D., on the basis of the inscriptions, which mentions the construction of a tank and a temple of the Sun by a king, Mānabhaṅga, in V.S. 770 (723 A.D.).³⁸

(b) *Kumbha Shyāma Temple* : Another temple that belongs to the same period and is similar in plan is known as the Kumbha Shyāma temple. Dedicated to Viṣṇu, it was renovated by Rārā Kumbhā. Therefore, it began to be called after him. In this temple, the sculptures on the plinth, on the exterior of the sanctum, and inside on the pilasters of the *antarāla* are of ca. 8th century A.D.,³⁹ but the other structures of the pillared *sabhāmaṇḍapa* and *śikhara* are later additions of the 15th century A.D.⁴⁰ Niches are carved on the plinth enshrining different incarnations of Viṣṇu, such as Balarāma-Revatī, Varāha, Narasimha and Trivikrama. Inside the *sabhāmaṇḍapa* are some beautiful panels (*paṭṭas*) depicting scenes of *Kṛiṣṇa Līla*, the marriage of Śiva Pārvati and of Viṣṇu reclining on a serpent.

Kalyānpur

Forty eight miles to the south of Udaipur is situated Kalyānpur, a popular centre of Śaiva worship in ancient Mewar, in contrast to Chittorgarh, which was a centre of Saura and Vaiṣṇava sects. No temples exist now in Kalyānpur as it is in ruins.

On the basis of the two inscriptions found in the ruins of the temples of Kalyānpur, they could be ascribed to the ca. 7th century A.D. One of them mentions that in the reign of Padda a temple of Śiva under the name of *Śalin* was built there by some one who aspired to attain spiritual association with Śiva.⁴¹ The epigraph has no date, but on the basis of its palaeography it could be assigned to the 7th century A.D.⁴² The other fragmentary inscription states that Kadarthideva and his wife had built a Śiva temple at Kalyānpur. The part of the inscription referring to the year has been damaged. This temple also could be assigned to the 7th century A.D., or early 8th century A.D.⁴³ The loose sculptures of this place, which are now preserved in the Pratap Museum and M.B. College, Udaipur, must be from this very temple. The sculptures are made of greenish black stone. The inscriptions, the ruins of the temples and the large number of sculptures are enough to suggest that Kalyānpur was an important centre of the Śaiva sect.

Āhaḍ

Āhaḍ is another important temple site in the region of Mewar. The ancient names of the city of Āhaḍ were Āghāṭapur and Āṭpur as is known from the inscription of Śakti Kumāra of V.S. 1030.⁴⁴ It was also known as *Gangodbheda Tīrtha*. It was a centre of the Vaiṣṇava cult during the 9th–10th centuries.

An inscription of V.S. 1010 (953 A.D.)⁴⁵ from this place refers to the existence of a temple of Viṣṇu, where the image of Ādivarāha was installed by a devotee of Viṣṇu. The images of a tortoise and fish, the incarnations of Viṣṇu, which are now preserved in the Āhaḍ Museum,⁴⁶ must have been from this temple. The Guhila ruler Allāṭa in whose reign the temple was built had formed a trust (*goṣṭhika*) for looking after its maintenance and for collecting donations and taxes from the merchants who passed through the city of Āhaḍ.

There was also a Sun temple in Āhaḍ. This is evident from the inscription⁴⁷ which mentions a grant of fourteen *drammas* for this temple. An image of the god Sun probably from the same place is now preserved in the Āhaḍ Museum, in which the Sun-god is seated in his chariot drawn by seven horses.

Besides the epigraphic and the sculptural examples, the extant temples of Viṣṇu in the city of Āhaḍ also strengthens the view that Āhaḍ was the centre of the Vaiṣṇava cult. In this temple Viṣṇu was worshipped in the aspect of *Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa*. It is situated behind the Police Station of Āhaḍ in a damaged state. However, its *śikhara* and the sanctum are intact but there is no image in the sanctum. A painting of Mirabai has been kept by the villagers there, though it has no association with the temple of Viṣṇu and it is now locally called the Mirabai temple.

The main niches on the exterior of this temple are enshrined with the images of Brahmā-Sāvitṛī, Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa lifted by Garuḍa and Umā-Māheśvara seated on a bull. Below these niches is carved a figure of a *Kīchaka* playing on a flute. This has led many scholars to commit the mistake of considering it as Kṛiṣṇa playing on the flute. This interpretation seemed all the more acceptable to them in view of the temple being locally called after Mīrā.

The representation of the various aspects of social life of this region in the sculptures of this temple makes it very interesting and important. Scenes like a blacksmith blowing fire and making iron tools and grocers weighing goods for sale,⁴⁸ have been vividly represented. Similarly, the depiction of village life through the medium of the *Kṛiṣṇa līlā* scenes is also noteworthy.

The date of the temple could be assigned to somewhere between the 9th-10th century A.D. This being the period of prosperity of the city of Āhaḍ, it was liable to encourage temple building activities there. This is evident from the inscription referring to the reign of Guhila ruler Allāṭa. This can also be confirmed by comparing its sculptures with the dated Sun temple of Chittor (8th century A.D.) and the Ambikā temple of Jagat (10th century A.D.).

Temple of Durga at Unwas

The temple of Durgā is situated near Haldighaṭī at Unwās, which is 30 miles from Udaipur. It is locally known as the Pippalādamātā temple.⁵⁰ It could be placed among the group of

the temples of Navadurgā (Jhālarāpātan) and Jagat (Udaipur), where the tradition of worshipping the mother-goddess exclusively is maintained with some minor differences among them. Unlike the temples at Jagat and Unwās, the one at Jhālarāpātan of Navadurgā, which is now ruined, was dedicated to a number of goddesses such as Chāmundā, Mahiṣamardini, etc. They are represented in the terrific aspects. In contrast to this, the pacific aspect of Mahiṣamardini is exclusively glorified and deified in the temples at Unwās and Jagat as could be gleaned from the images enshrined in their back principal niches. The Piplāmātā temple at Osia can not be grouped with them as it is not an exclusive temple of the mother-goddess, but its special feature is that here Mahiṣamardini is enshrined both in the principal niche and the sanctum with the difference that in the latter she is also flanked by Gaṇapati and Kubera.

The date of the temple at Unwās could be decided on the basis of the inscription of V.S. 1016 (960 A.D.)⁵¹ found there, as well as from its common features with the temple at Jagat, which was also built in the same period. Both these temples were built under the patronage of the same ruler Allāṭa (V.S. 1010)⁵² and, therefore, the group of artists was also most probably common at both the places. Another similar feature is that they are the epitomization of the Durgā, Sarasvatī and the Lakṣmī aspects of the goddess.

The temple of Unwās is important more for the study of the development of architectural rather than the sculptural motifs. The decorative motifs of the *pīṭha* are absent in this temple. Not only the *pīṭha*, but also the exterior of the sanctum is plain and devoid of any decorative carving except the three niches on the three sides. These niches contain the images of Chāmundā, Kṣemankarī and Mahiṣamardini. No male deity is represented in the temple.⁵³

Ambika temple at Jagat

Another temple of the goddess where no other male deity except that of the *dikpalas* is carved, is the Ambikā temple at Jagat, 42 kms. from Udaipur. It was built in the early part of the 10th

century A.D., as could be inferred from the style and the inscription on the pillar. One of the inscriptions dated fifth of the dark half of the month of Vaiśākha of V.S. 1017 on one of the pillars refers to the salutations to the goddess Ambādevi by Sāmvpura, the son of Valluka, who had either reconstructed or conserved it.⁵⁴ The phrases—“*Punaḥ Saṃskāraṃ kartāro*” and “*labhate mūlikam phalam*” show that in V.S. 1017 (960. A.D.) the work of its repairs and that of its accessory buildings, step-well, tank, etc., was performed by Sāmvpura which suggests that it was built before V.S. 1017.

In the light of the above facts, the contention of R.C. Agrawal that the temple at Jagat was built in V.S. 1017 and its builder was Sāmvpura⁵⁵ seems erroneous. In the inscription it is clearly pointed out that Sāmvpura was not its builder, that it was already in existence and that he only repaired and performed the work of its conservation and preservation. Therefore, the temple must have been in existence at least 25 years before the year 1017 V.S. (960 A.D.). That it was built in the 10th century A.D., can also be confirmed by the architectural development in the context of the flat-faced nature of the main *śikhara*.⁵⁶

The temple complex at Jagat consists of three parts – the entrance *maṇḍapa*, the main shrine and the small shrine for the water outlet of the main shrine. The entrance *maṇḍapa* must have been used for dance, recitals and gatherings in the honour of the universal goddess. The upper structure of this *nritya maṇḍapa* was of bricks which has now fallen into decay. The two pillars of the porch have also disappeared. On the upper part of these pillars was an image of *alasakanyā* standing on lotus seat. The sculptural mouldings of the plinth are preserved. Their carving is very simple but they definitely suggest the beginning of the new style of carving of the *tharas* on the exterior of *jagatī* of the temple. After two plain mouldings is a row of *kīrttimukhas*, a row of railing and the pillar motif; and then after two simple mouldings is carved another row of the *chaitya* window motif.

These carvings when compared with the simple mouldings of the temple at Unwās, which was built sometime after that of

Jagat, indicate that there were no fixed principles of carving these mouldings of the plinth till this period. However, these stray attempts of the artists of Jagat helped in the growth of certain principles of the plinth mouldings of the temples which came to be established by the 11th and 12th centuries.

In the temple at Jagat, the main shrine of Ambikā is about fifty yards away from the *nritya maṇḍapa*. The main shrine has a porch, a *sabhāmaṇḍapa* and a sanctum. It is an example of the exclusive worship of the mother-goddess in the protective and boon-conferring aspects of Durgā. Among all her representations the Mahiṣamardini aspect is predominant. Here in the temple, Durgā, Lakṣmī, Sarasvatī, Kṣemankarī and Pārvatī doing penance were worshipped. The main image in the sanctum was of Kṣemankarī,⁵⁷ as is evident from the *parikara* of the image, which is still there in the sanctum.

Another characteristic of the sculptural representation of this temple, is the depiction of the Mahiṣamardini theme in its various aspects. The demon *mahiṣa* is represented here (i) in an animal form, (ii) in human form but coming out of the severed head of a buffalo, and (iii) in full human form. Except for the figures of Chāmundā and Bhairavī no other terrific aspect of the goddess is represented in the temple. Similarly, the panels of Sapta-mātrikās flanked by Vīrabhadra and Gaṇeśa are also not represented in this temple; they are only carved on the door jambs of the *nritya maṇḍapa*. Only the theme of Mahiṣamardini is very elaborately delineated in this temple. This shows that the development of all her manifestations had achieved definite form by the 10th century A.D.

The exterior of the temple is full of musicians, dancing groups accompanied by all kinds of musical instruments and *apsarās* in various poses of *sadyasnātā* and *alasakanyā*. An *apsarā* is picking a thorn from her feet, while others are represented playing on the *vīṇa* or with the *mayūra*, fondling a child, sporting with a monkey and beating him with a mango twig, doing her toilet or carrying something on a plate, etc. Not a single posture of an *apsarā* is repeated.⁵⁸

The scheme of representation of these *apsarās* as dancing and singing with musical instruments is in accordance with the various appellations of the goddess as a lover of music—“*vināve-numridangavādyarasikā*”⁵⁹ and “*sangītanrityaprabhāṅgī*”.⁶⁰ Hence the goddess is shown surrounded by musicians and dancers. A very unique feature of the Mahiṣamardini sculptures of Jagat is the depiction of a parrot. The image in the back principal niche as well as in the niche of the *antarāla* represent a parrot at the top above the goddess. The goddess as sporting with the parrot and enjoying its speech has been alluded to in the *stotras* of Śamkarāchārya as—“*ramatkīravāṇīm*”.⁶¹ Other *stotras* also refer to the association of a parrot with Ambikā.⁶²

The goddess Sarasvatī and Umā are also represented in this temple. The temple appears to be an epitome of the form of worship of the Devi cult as prevalent in the southern region of Rajasthan in the 10th century A. D. The presentation of the terrific-forms of the goddess has been deliberately avoided. This suggests that the benevolent cult of *Śakti pūjā*, which was free from the esoteric forms of worship, was prevalent in this part of Rajasthan in the 10th century A.D.

Nagdā

Nagdā is another important temple-site in the region of Mewar. It is 17 miles from Udaipur. In the fragmentary inscription of V.S. 718 (661 A.D.)⁶³ its name is stated as Nāgahrada. This inscription ascribes antiquity to this city but stylistically, its existing remains are not so old, probably the older monuments were destroyed with the passage of time. Another inscription of V. S. 1083 (1026 A. D.) found at this place refers to a Guhila king, Śrīdhara,⁶⁴ who constructed some temples at Nagdā. The extant *Sās-Bahā* temples must be among those which have been referred to in this inscription. Stylistically also they appear to belong to the late 10th or the early 11th century A. D.

Like the *Sās-Bahā* temples at the Gwalior fort, the temples at Nagdā are also denominated similarly because one is bigger than the other. The bigger temple is known as the *Sās* temple and the

other smaller one as the *Bahu* temple.⁶⁵ The contention that the temples at Nāgdā were called after the name of the king *Sahasrabahu*, who got them constructed, does not stand historically true as there was no Guhila king of this name.

Nāgdā had gained importance as it was the old capital of the Guhila rulers. The latter belonged to the solar dynasty, as a result the *Sās* temple is dedicated to Viṣṇu. An image of four-armed Viṣṇu is enshrined in the back principal niche. Above Viṣṇu, there is another niche, where the image of Balarāma is carved. The same order of decoration is also followed in the *Bahu* temple. In both the temples, the exterior is decorated with small figures depicting love-scenes. Behind them at the right hand corner is the temple of Śakti representing various manifestations of the female energy.

The interior of the *Maṇḍapa* of the *Sās* temple is impressive. It has a closed hall, a porch, a doorway and latticed windows. The pillars of the *maṇḍapa* are massive and are connected by heavy *torāṇa* arches. The pillars are octagonal and carved with Vaiṣṇava sculptures. The carving of these pillars, *torāṇa* and ceiling is very intricate and fine.

Another group of the temples near Nāgdā is known as Ekalinga or Kailāśpurī. All the temples of this group belong to the later part of the 12th century A. D., except the temple of Lakulīśa where an inscription of V. S. 1028 (971 A. D.) has been discovered.⁶⁶ The latter is the oldest temple of the group.

The Temple at Tūsa (Mandesar)

The sun temple at Tūsa (Mandesar) is situated near Udaipur on the left bank of the river Berach. In comparison with the Vaiṣṇava cult, the sun cult was less popular in the Mewar region. Of course, there were some temples exclusively for the Saura cult, but subsequently they were also used for the worship of Viṣṇu or Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa.⁶⁷

The sun temple at Tūsa was exclusively meant for the worshippers of the Saura cult as no other deity was represented there.

The *śikhara* and the *mandapa* of this temple have been reconstructed with lime plaster. The *śikhara* is plain. It has an octagonal domed *sabhamandapa* with brackets, each bracket having *apsarās* standing on the heads of elephants. An image of *mātrikā* is carved on each pillar where it is joined to the bracket. Thus in all, there are eight *mātrikās* on the top of pillars. The latter are simple and unfinished. On the pilasters of the *antarāla* are two images of seated Sūrya, which are damaged. It is noteworthy that the figures of the exterior of this temple are bigger in size than the usual one found at the other temple sites in Rajasthan. The exterior of the *antarāla* has also a unique figure of Sūrya flanked by two females,⁶⁸ probably the two wives of Sūrya. They are delineated as *apsarās* for they do not have any identifying mark of the consorts of the sun god. Showing the association of *apsarās*, with Sūrya is not in the prevalent traditions in sculpture, therefore, this sculpture, we could say, is a speciality of this temple. The principal niches of the three sides of the exterior of the sanctum also present images of the Sun seated in a chariot.⁶⁹

Iswal

The temple at Iswāl is situated about 13 miles from Udaipur. It could be assigned to the early part of the 12th century A. D., on the basis of two inscriptions of V. S. 1161 and V. S. 1242⁷⁰ found there. The inscriptions of V. S. 1242 refers to a Guhila Mathan Singh, and the other inscription mentions the name of the principal deity as *Vohigha Swāmi*.⁷¹ The inscription is probably of the time of the renovation of the *mandapa* or consecration of some new image. The temple must have been built about fifty years before the date of the inscription.

The temple is a complete example of a *pañchāyatana* temple. An image of Viṣṇu is enshrined in the sanctum of the main temple. It has images of Gaṇeśa, Śakti, Sūrya and Śiva in its subsidiary shrines. Its sculptures show the merging of the Saura cult into Vaiṣṇavism, as can be seen from a composite image of the Sun carved in the back principal niche of the temple. Also one can discern definite signs of decay in the style of carving, which dates the temple to the early half of the 12th century.

III

Jhalawar and Kota

The region of Jhālāwār and Kota is full of the remains of monuments dating from the 7th century A. D. In this region Śaivism and Śāktism flourished side by side from a very early period. The inscription from Gangadhāra (423-24 A.D.)⁷² refers to a temple of *ḍakinīs* on the banks of the river *Gargarā*. This proves the prevalence of Śākta and *tāntric* practices there from the 5th century A.D. Other cults such as Vaiṣṇava and Saura were also prevalent in this region, but the number of their temples was comparatively much fewer than those of Śaivism and Śāktism. A detailed study of these temples indicates the developed aesthetic sense of the people and shows that they had the talent to translate into stone their feelings and adoration for gods. Despite the fact that the size of these temples is smaller in comparison with those in Orissa and Central India, even then they sometimes surpass them in elegance of form and in the profuse elaboration of minute and intricate details.

Chandravati

The ancient city of Chandrāvati is situated at a distance of about a mile to the south of the town of Jhālarāpāṭan. It was founded in 689 A. D., by Voppaka during the reign of Durgagaṇa.⁷³ In 1789 A. D., it was given the new name of Jhālarāpāṭan, after Jhālā Zalim Singh, who founded this town.⁷⁴ The ruins and the many loose sculptures of the temples of the old city of Chandra-bhāgā are lying on the left bank of the Chandrabhāgā river.

Among the many temples at the bank of the river Chandra-bhāgā, the Śītalesvara temple was the biggest and the earliest temple of Śiva in Rajasthan. The inscription discovered near this temple refers to a temple of Śiva and glorifies Śiva in the aspect of *Viśva-marti*.⁷⁵ Therefore, it could be no other temple than the Śītalesvara temple itself. The Śītalesvara temple is dedicated to Śiva as Lakulīśa of the Pāśupata sect.

The temple of Śītalesvara was reconstructed but it retains some of the original pillars of the *maṇḍapa*, sanctum, and the

base. On the lintel of its doorway, there is an image of two armed Lakuliśa.⁷⁶ The inscription on the pedestal of an image of Varāha tells us about the prevalence of the Pāsupata sect worshipping Lakuliśa. It refers to Īśānaju, the Śaiva teacher, who lived there. The inscription suggests that being a protagonist of the Pāsupata cult he must have been the chief priest of this temple.⁷⁷

Other small temples at Chandrāvati :—Besides this temple of Śiva, there are two more small temples at the bank of the Chandrabhāgā, dedicated to Śiva. Their doorways are illustrations of the finest carvings.

One inscription from Jhālarāpāṭan referring to the construction of a temple of Śiva by Janna during the reign of Udayāditya Paramāra in V.S. 1143 (1086 A.D.) suggests that other temples of Śiva were also built at Chandrabhāgā (the modern Jhālarāpāṭan),⁷⁸ the traces of which do not exist now.

Another very interesting temple known as the Nava Durgā temple consists of images that show, that this region was a stronghold of *Śakti-Pūja* and *tāntric* practices. It further corroborates the reference to a temple of *dākinī* the existence of which is found in the inscription of Gangadhāra (423 A.D.).⁷⁹ In this temple the sculptures of Chāmuṇḍā and other goddesses emphasizing their nudity are preserved. The structure and plan of this temple are so small that all the gigantic size images that are kept there do not at all seem to be of this temple. It also compels one to conclude that there was a bigger temple than this one at the bank of Chandrabhāgā to which belonged these sculptures of goddesses.

Vaiṣṇava Temple at Jhalarapatan

Abbott, the Political Superintendent of the state of Jhālār-wār, states that when the modern town of Jhālarāpāṭan was founded separately from the ruins of Chandrabhāgā, the Vaiṣṇava temple was already there in the centre of the new city⁸⁰, and was known as the *Sat Saheli* temple.

Since then many additions have been made to the temple. The main part of the temple and the *śikhara* are old and may be

assigned to the later part of the 10th century A.D., on the basis of coins⁸¹ and inscriptions which were found in Jhālarāpaṭan by Tod,⁸² Bhandarkar⁸³ and others. These inscriptions date from the 7th century A.D., to the 13th century A.D. The *sabhamanḍapa* with its carved *toranas* and massive pillars and the entrance doorways are later additions of the early 12th century A.D., the terrace and the remaining additions are that of the 18th and 19th centuries.

The exterior of the sanctum represents Vaiṣṇava incarnations and the image of Sūrya. The *śukanāsā* and the lower part of the *śikhara* are carved with the images of the gods and goddesses in dancing postures. There is an image of dancing Śiva in the *nritya dakṣiṇā* aspect. He is shown flanked by Viṣṇu and Brahmā adoring him, while the other gods, the *ṛṣis* and the goddesses are rejoicing and playing the orchestra for the dance of the Great Lord.⁸⁴ The tradition of carving the *śukanāsā* is a special characteristic of this temple among the post-Gupta temples in Rajasthan. This tradition was followed in the temple of Udeśvara at Bijolia⁸⁵ (Rajasthan), and in the Nīlakantheśvara temple at Udaipur (Gwalior).⁸⁶

Kota

The region of Kota was studded with many temples of Śiva and other gods. The temples at Aṭrū, Chārchomā, Mukundarā, Krishna Vilās, Budhadeet, Kansuā, etc., are in a completely ruined condition, but they show the religious leanings of the people during the period. The remains of the temple at Krishna Vilās confirm that it was dedicated to Viṣṇu. The temples at Ramgarh and Aṭrū were bigger in size than the others of this region. They were dedicated to Śiva.

(a) *Kansuā* :—The temple at Kansuā or Kaṇvāśrama was the earliest centre of Śiva worship in this part of the region. The ruined temple at Kansuā could be dated with the help of the inscription of 738 A.D., found at this place.⁸⁷ Here Śiva was worshipped in the form of *Chaturmukha linga*. The temple has been rebuilt, and among the remains of the temple only a *Chaturmukha Śivalinga* and an image of Lakuliśa are extant.

(b) *Bādoli* :—Another centre of Śaivism in the 9th and 10th centuries A.D., was the group of the temples at Bādoli, which is about 32 miles from Kota at the bank of the Chambal river. Here Śiva was worshipped in the aspect of the Great Cosmic Dancer. The group of temples at Bādoli was first brought to the attention of the public gaze by Tod.⁸⁸ He has identified many of the images wrongly because of a lack of knowledge of Indian mythology and iconography, but his praise and appreciation for the carvings of the temples is really worthy of them.

The main Śiva temple consists of a sanctum, a *maṇḍapa* and a detached *nritya maṇḍapa* which is locally known as the *Śringār Chaurī*. Its plan is similar to that of the Ambikā Temple at Jagat. The *maṇḍapa* of the main shrine is open and has a *toraṇa* carved with dancers and musicians. From all sides, the octagonal pillars of the *sabhāmaṇḍapa* are adorned with *apsarā* figures in different postures as if circumambulating the pillars. The carving of the pillars, the *makara-toraṇa*, and *apsarās* anticipates the Lākṣmaṇa temple at Khajuraho;⁸⁹ hence the temple at Bādoli could be assigned an earlier date than the latter, i.e., roughly to the 9th century A.D. The local touch in the treatment of the *apsarās* could be clearly observed from their dresses and the pet animals with them. One of the *apsarās* is shown with a camel sitting beside her. Naṭarāja Śiva is enshrined both on the doorway of the main shrine and in the back principal niche.

Another characteristic of this temple is the depiction of Gangā and Yamunā as the attendants of Śiva and other goddesses. They are not only represented so on the door jambs of the main shrine but also on either sides of Chāmunda, Naṭarāja and Tripurāntaka Śiva on the three principal niches of the exterior of the sanctum.

The temple complex at Bādoli has many other small shrines which are plain on the exterior but enshrined with images in the sanctum. These shrines are of Maheśamūrti, Mahiṣamardini, Vāmana and Gaṇapati. Besides, there is a small temple in which the image of Śeṣa-śāyī Viṣṇu was enshrined.⁹⁰

Another specimen worthy of description at Bādoli is the shrine of *trimūrti*. Here the image of *Maheśamūrti* is enshrined and on its upper corners Brahmā and Viṣṇu are depicted standing in adoration of the deity. The image is damaged and though not as massive as the Elephanta Maheśamūrti, it has appeal and elegance in the style of carving.

There was one more shrine in this group which is now completely destroyed except for the doorway and two pillars, which are lying on the ground. The shrine must have been dedicated to Lakulīṣa as his image has been carved on the lintel of its doorway. This indicates that Bādoli must have been a centre of the Pāśupata cult in the 9th century A.D.

IV JAIPUR

In the region of Jaipur, Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism were popular as is evident from the temples at Ābānerī and Harṣanātha respectively. This part of the south-eastern Rajasthan is not as rich in temple sites as the other part. However, from the point of view of sculptures it is magnificent in style and elegance.

Abaneri

Ābānerī is situated four miles from Bāndikui. There are two monuments of this period – the Chānd Bāoḍī⁹¹ and the temple of Harṣatmātā.

(a) *Harṣatmātā* :—The Harṣatmātā temple has been rebuilt from the debris of the original temple. Its ruins have been assigned to the 8th-9th centuries A.D.⁹² At present it is enshrined with an image of Devi, but the sculptures in the cardinal niches of Vāsu-deva-Viṣṇu, Pradyumna and Balarāma-Saṁkarṣaṇa indicate that it was originally dedicated to Viṣṇu.⁹³ It was a terraced-temple in which three circumambulatories were made around the main shrine and *maṇḍapa*. At present only two terraces have survived. It is comparable in design to the ruined temples at Maṇḍor (Jodhpur) and Parānagar (Alwar).

The main characteristic of the temple of Harṣatmātā is its panels, which are carved in the niches around the plinth of the third terrace and on which are depicted scenes of love, music and dance in the gardens, and mango groves. These sculptures mainly represent *śringar rasa*, and love dalliances of a king in his pleasure garden.⁹⁴

Mrs. Jayakara opines that these panels appear to have been carved in the 7th century A.D., and were embedded in the base of the temple in the 9th century A.D. This conjecture does not seem convincing as it would not have been possible to insert the panels later on in the temple. This is because it is not a monolithic cave temple but a structural temple, where it is not possible to take out a large slab without seriously injuring the structure. These sculptures, therefore, seem to be coeval with the building of the temple i.e., 9th century A.D. Besides, the depiction of the hair style, ornamentation, carving and the expression of emotions and *rasa* prove that they are the legacy of the Gupta art.

The ancient temple of Ābānerī was also adorned with the sculptures of Surya, a Goddess in the aspects of Mahiṣamardini,⁹⁵ Pārvatī and Śṛṅgāra Durgā; Śiva as Ardhanārīśvara and Naṭarāja dancing in the company of *mātrikās*. Besides these, there are the composite images of Sūrya-Nārāyaṇa, Śiva and Brahmā and the scenes of the life of Śṛīkṛṣṇa. The sculptures depicting scenes of Kṛṣṇa Līlā and Śaiva sculptures have been put back haphazardly in the dome of the *maṇḍapa* at the time of renovation. Some of the sculptures have been transferred to the museum at Āmber.

(b) *Chānd Bāorī* :—Another interesting monument at Ābānerī is the Chānd Bāorī which is still in a good state of preservation and working condition. On one side of the Kuṇḍa are two projected shrines which have beautiful images of Mahiṣamardini and Gaṇeśa. There are stairs on the remaining three sides of the Kuṇḍa.

Temple of Harsanatha at Harsa hill (Sikar)

The temple of Harṣanātha at Harṣa Hill situated near Sikar, is a land mark in the traditions and history of temple-

aL building. It is now badly damaged. Most of its sculptures are either damaged or taken to distant and unknown places, but the remnants of the temple speak of its mature and elegant carving. Shiva Singh, the chief of Sikar principality constructed another temple with a plain and stupendously high *śikhara* near the Harṣanātha temple.

2/ Fortunately an inscription of Chāhamāna Vigharāja II of V.S. 1030 found at the old temple of Harṣanātha speaks about the details of the temple.⁹⁶ The inscription states that this temple was completed on the 13th of the bright half of Āṣāḍha for the year V.S. 1013 (956 A.D.) at the top of the Harṣa hill. It was built by Allāṭa, who was a Śaiva teacher and who lived there. He had built this temple with the wealth received from the people. Śiva was worshipped as the main deity under the name of Śrī Harṣa, which is not known elsewhere. It was after him that the hill was called Harṣagiri. Here Śiva was glorified as Tripurāntaka and named Harṣadeva. The temple was charming with the expanse of its spacious hall (*mandapa*) and a *torana-dvāra*. An image of Nandi was enshrined in the front of the temple. It had a lovely subsidiary shrine in which the statues of Vikaṭā and the Paṇḍava brothers were enshrined. It had an orchard for providing flowers for worship, a *prapa* or water reservoir for cattle, and a well for sprinkling the orchard. The floor of the courtyard in the front of the temple was paved with smooth stones and was levelled and made easy for walking. These works were completed by Bhāvadyota, the disciple of Allāṭa, who was a Śaiva teacher and who lived here after the latter's death.

9/ On the discovery of the temple of Harṣanātha on December 3, 1834, Sargent E. Dean found it in a badly ruined condition.⁹⁷ Consequently, it was reconstructed.⁹⁸ Many of its loose sculptures were shifted to the Sikar Museum by A.W.T. Webb, an officer at Sikar.

In the temple of Harṣanātha, there is now a *Chaturmukha Śivalinga* in the sanctum, which is *in situ*. Its porch, sanctum and *mandapa* have been reconstructed from the ruins of the temple.

In front of the porch, there is a platform on which is enshrined an image of Nandī in white marble facing the sanctum. The image of Nandī is also *in situ* and its description is corroborated by the inscription of V.S. 1030. The subsidiary shrine of the temple is now completely destroyed but its sculptures of Vikatā⁹⁹ and the Pāṇḍava¹⁰⁰ brothers were discovered from the ruins of the temple.

The sculptures of the Pāṇḍava brothers were correctly identified by Bhandarkar who, however, committed a blunder in the case of Vikatā. He identified her with Draupadī or Hiḍimbā, the ogress, and considered a figure of an ordinary woman in the ruins as that of Vikatā for no plausible reasons.

This conjecture of Bhandarkar has been proved wrong by the recent discovery of an image inscribed as Vikatā in the sanctum of the temple. The image represents a colossal statue of Pārvatī standing on an iguana, adorned with *jaṭāmukuta* holding two lotuses on which images of Gaṇeśa and Lakulīśa are carved.¹⁰¹ It could therefore, be inferred that Vikatā was meant for Pārvatī. Bhandarkar had himself seen this image of Pārvatī in the sanctum, but owing to an oversight he did not see the inscribed label on it.

Besides the sculptures of Pārvatī, there are sixteen *apsarās* embedded on the interior walls of the sanctum with their names inscribed. They were installed on the interior walls of the sanctum at the time of the reconstruction of the temple. Therefore, the contention of R. C. Agrawal that they were originally carved there,¹⁰² can not be accepted. Many arguments could be put forth to substantiate the point.

First, that the sanctum was renovated is proved by the fact that one panel depicting the scene of the court of Indra has been wrongly put upside down as a slab of its ceiling. Secondly, the inscribed image of Vikatā was originally enshrined in the subsidiary shrine which is alluded to in the inscription of V.S. 1030.¹⁰³ This shows that it was studded on the interior wall of the sanctum only at the time of the reconstruction of the temple. Thirdly, the images of the *apsarās* of the sanctum are similar in size and representation to the one that is still *in situ* on the exterior wall of the

sanctum. Moreover, the other contemporary temples in Rajasthan like that of Jagat, Mandesar, etc., also show the tradition of representing the *apsarās* on the exterior walls of the sanctum. Fourthly, as all the sculptures of the *apsarās* and one of Pārvaṭī are similar in size and height, they could be appropriately displayed on the interior walls of the sanctum as specimens of elegant carvings so as to remind the visitors of the glorious past of the ruined temple of Śrī Harṣa. Also it would not have been proper to fix them on the outside walls of the sanctum of a ruined temple from the point of view of safety and preservation. On these grounds, it could be safely surmised that the sculptures of the *apsarās* and one of Pārvaṭī did not belong to the interior of the sanctum but were shifted there at the time of the reconstruction of the temple.

The temple being dedicated to Śiva, it is naturally adorned with many beautiful sculptures of the Śaiva themes. Its sculptural representations mainly reflect that aspect of Śiva when he is celebrating his victory over Tripura with other gods, through dance, music, joy and happiness. Hence the sculptures of gods and goddesses and of the *apsarās* and the *gandharvas* in dancing postures become meaningful. One of the verses of the inscription of V.S. 1030 explains the significance of the dance panels. The event which it refers to is Śiva's destruction of Tripura, who had expelled Indra and other gods from heaven. It was at mount Harṣa that the victory was celebrated and Śiva was praised and adored by these restored deities.¹⁰⁴

The panel depicting dancers and musicians¹⁰⁵ around Śiva and Pārvaṭī seated on the bull has found its way to the Kansas Art Gallery. These musicians and dancers are also among the grateful celestials, who are paying homage to the Great Lord, on their restoration to heaven. Another interesting panel explains fully the verse of how Indra offers joyful salutations to the God Śiva. The panel depicts his court rejoicing and expressing gratitude and paying joyous homage to God Śiva.¹⁰⁶ Martin Lerner has also published a number of sculptures from this temple, which are preserved in the Cleveland Museum. Among them is a panel representing a female dancer in the centre, surrounded by male and female musicians each

of them holding either a *khañjarī*, or a *mañjira*, or a bamboo-flute, or a drum, or a *mridanga* or a *vīṇā*.¹⁰⁷

The sculptures of *apsarās* which are placed in the sanctum also represent the different moods of rejoicing. They are delineated in different dance postures; one *apsarā* is playing on the *vīṇā*, another described as *Salilā* is depicted as dancing and holding her veil with one hand; *Nābhilā* is represented as blowing the conch; and *Maṇḍani* is shown holding a flower garland.¹⁰⁸ Thus, even in the depiction of *apsarās*, the main theme of dance and rejoicing of Harṣanātha is followed.

The inscription (V.S. 1030) states that at Harṣanātha the image of the dancing-Śiva representing the *pratyālīḍha karaṇa* of dance was carved and placed in the principal niche of the temple. Unfortunately, no such representation of Śiva has yet been discovered. However, some other poses of the images of the dancing Śiva were found here. An image of dancing Śiva flanked by nine male and female dancers and musicians has been referred by R.C. Agrawal.¹⁰⁹ Other Śaiva representations such as *Lingodbhava mūrti*, *Lakulīśa* and the dancing Śiva are noteworthy. Similarly, the sculptures of *Sūrya*¹¹⁰ and that of *Brahmā* are also very elegantly carved. The representation of the *mātrikās*, eighteen-armed-colossal-Mahiṣamardinī, *Vaiṇāyaki*¹¹¹ and *Pārvatī* suggests that the worship of goddesses in their pacific and protective forms was prevalent at this place along with the Pāśupata cult.

V ALWAR

Temples at Paranagar

The village of Parānagar is about 96 kms. from Jaipur on the Jaipur-Rajgarh road in the district of Alwar. Its ancient name was Rājyapura.¹¹² There is a temple of Śiva, known as the Nīlakaṇṭha temple besides the remnants of about 18 temples which are scattered within an area of three miles. Among them, the temple of Nīlakaṇṭha is the only one which has survived the ravages of time and vandalism. Among the ruins, there are two more

temples of Śiva ascertained by the extant Śiva *lingas* in their sanctums. At some distance from the Nīlakaṇṭha temple, is the dilapidated Jaina temple which is locally known as the Now-gaza temple probably because of colossal image of Tīrthankara enshrined there. The remaining temples are badly damaged and are lying in the shape of huge mounds of stones. Therefore, no definite opinion can be formed about them. The plinth-structures of these temples are very high; and in some cases they are even 8' to 10' high. The loose sculptures of the ruined temples are stored in the closed verandah and compound of the Nīlakaṇṭha temple. The temples are evidence of the fact that along with Brahmanism, Jainism also flourished in this part of Alwar.

From the ruins and plinth-structures of the temples at Parānagar it is evident that they all must have been of a colossal size and height. Like their counterparts at Ābānerī (Jaipur) and Maṇḍor (Jodhpur) they were built on the pattern of terraced-temples. Krishna Deva is of the opinion that the tradition of building the terraced-temples continued not only in Rajasthan, but also in other parts of India as well as in the countries of South-east Asia including Burma and Java. The earliest terraced-temple is at Nandargarh dated to the first century B.C.¹¹³

Temple of Nīlakaṇṭha :—The temple of Nīlakaṇṭha and the other dilapidated Śaiva temples are living examples of the prevalence of Śaivism in the area of Parānagar.

The temple of Nīlakaṇṭha was built in about the early part of the 10th century A.D., as could be gleaned from the inscriptions found there. The short inscription of V.S. 1010 (953 A.D.),¹¹⁴ on the pedestal of a figure of Gaṇeśa indicates that the temple was already in regular worship when it was installed. Further, the donatory inscription of V.S. 1016 (959 A.D.) of Mathanadeva, the Bargujara chief of Rājyapura who was a feudatory of the Imperial Pratihāra rulers, also shows that the temple was in existence for quite a long time. From this it could be surmised that the temple was built somewhere around the early part of the 9th century A.D. The general style of the carving of its pillars also belongs to this period.

The temple of Nīlakaṇṭha has been rebuilt with its old material. Its sanctum, *maṇḍapa* and the entrance are intact, but its four subsidiary shrines, which are also referred to in the inscription of V.S. 1016¹¹⁵ are dilapidated. The carvings of the niches of these shrines have been worn out by the effect of the weather.

The main temple faces the west. In its sanctum is enshrined a black Śiva-*linga* of quartz stone after which the temple derives its name. The pillars of the *sabhāmaṇḍapa* are circular. Each pillar is adorned with panels of dancing figures below which is an *apsara* in different postures of dance which depict her movement around the pillar.¹¹⁶ The carving of the pillars is very beautiful and reminds one of the pillars of the Badoli temples of the same period.

The exterior walls of its sanctum are beautifully sculptured and decorated with the figures of divinities and *apsarās*. The main niche of the southern side enshrines an image of Narasimha, who is shown struggling with Hiranyakaśipu. This depiction of Narasimha is a deviation from its traditional representation prescribed by the iconographic texts. However, a similar example has been found in another ruined Śaiva temple, which is next to the Nīlakaṇṭha temple.

The principal niche on the back wall of the sanctum of the Nīlakaṇṭha temple contains a syncretistic image of Sūrya, Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Śiva.¹¹⁷ Here the main figure is of the Sun but in him other aspects of the supreme god—Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva are synthesised.¹¹⁸ The representation of different deities symbolising different aspects of nature in one supreme God was the special feature of the sculptures of the post-Gupta period.

Another image which attracts attention is in the northern principal niche. Here the *saṁhāra murti* of Śiva is shown in the aspect of destroying Tripura. The image is represented holding a bow and an arrow in two out of the eight hands and standing in the *pratyālīḍha* posture, keeping one foot on the back of the bull.

VI

Bharatpur

The region of Bharatpur is important because of the provenance of the sculpture of the Kuṣāṇa and the Gupta periods. Bharatpur remained under the Muslim domination for a longer period.¹¹⁹ As a result of this the Hindu temples at Bayānā, Kāmān, etc., were demolished and turned into mosques. The discovery of many Śiva *lingas* from the villages viz., Gāmaḍi, Āghapur and Chaumā-Baṇḍapurā shows that Śaivism was popular in this region. At Satwās, the ruins of a Sun temple have also been discovered. This indicates that Sun-worship was also prevalent to some extent in the region of Bharatpur.

Bayana

The ancient name of Bayānā was Śrīpathā.¹²⁰ It had a temple of Viṣṇu, which was locally known as Ukhā Mandir or Ushā Mandir. During the Muslim rule these monuments were converted into mosques.¹²¹ One of the pillars bearing an inscription in the mosque of Bhītari Bāhari Mohallā shows that it belonged to a temple which was originally dedicated to Viṣṇu.¹²² This inscription also confirms the name of Bayānā as Śrīpathā.

Kaman

In Kāmān also there is a mosque known as Chaurāsi Khambā. It is built of the debris of an old Hindu temple. The pillars in the mosque are profusely carved with sculptures and decorated with pot and foliage designs. From the style of the carving we could say that the pillars belonged to the Śaiva and the Vaiṣṇava temples. This is also confirmed by a pillar on which are inscribed the words—“*namah Śivaya*”. The temple is probably of the 8th century A.D., because the alphabets appear to be of this period. One pillar of the mosque also bears an inscription which records the construction of a temple of Viṣṇu by Vachchhikā, the wife of Durgagaṇa of the Śūrasena dynasty.¹²³

Another epigraphic record furnishes the information of a Śiva temple known as the Kāmyakeśvara temple at Kāmān. From

donatory inscriptions it also becomes evident that other deities like Viṣṇu and Chāmunda were also worshipped along with the principal deity Śiva. It is also corroborated by the discovery of composite Śiva-lingas,¹²⁴ wherein other gods are depicted around the Śiva-linga and the four heads of Śiva are represented surmounting them. It was between 786 A.D., and 896 A.D., that the images of Śiva, Pārvatī and Viṣṇu were installed in this temple.¹²⁵

Temples built during the 8th to 10th centuries A. D., are found scattered all over Rajasthan. Among these the sites of Kota, Jhalāwar, Udaipur and Jaipur are the best preserved because of the quality of stone. As a result, the sites of Chittor (Udaipur) and Parānagar (Alwar) continued to be the centres of temple building for many years. They attracted the followers of both Hinduism and Jainism. Similarly, the site of Osia also developed as the centre of worship of all sects of Hinduism and Jainism. These sites also represent the chronological development of sculpture from the early period to 12th century A.D.

References

1. The sun temple at Raṇakapur could be cited as another example which was neglected with the predominance of Jainism and construction of the Jaina temples in the 15th century A.D.
2. D.R. Bhandarkar, "Two Sculptures at Maṇḍor", *ASIAR*, 1905-06, pp. 135-140; J.H. Marshall and D.R. Sahni, "Excavations at Maṇḍor", *ASIAR*, 1909-10, pp. 94-98, pl. XLIV; James Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, Vol. II, pp. 836 and 840.
3. D. R. Bhandarkar, "Temples of Osia", *ASIAR*, 1908-09, pp. 100-15.
4. J. H. Marshall, *ASIAR*, 1906-07, p. 42; See also, D.R. Bhandarkar, *PRASWC*, 1906-07, p. 38.
5. P. C. Nāhar, "Inscription No. 788, found in the Jaina temple of Mahāvīra (Osia)", *Jaina Lekha Sangraha*, p. 192, vs. 9.
6. Dr. Hoernle, "Paṭṭāvalī of the Upakeśa gachchha", *Indian Antiquary*, XIX, pp. 233 ff; D. R. Bhandarkar, "Temples of Osia", *ASIAR*, 1908-09, pp. 100-01.

7. Bhandarkar, *op. cit.*, p. 100.
8. "Ghaṭiyālā Inscription No. 1 of Pratihāra Kakkuka V. S. 918", *EI*, IX, pp. 279-81.
9. Bhandarkar, *op. cit.*, p. 100.
10. *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, III, ch. 94, vs. 36.
11. A *Chakra* was carved on the *śikhara* of the temple No. 1. Photograph showing the *chakra* has been published in *ASIAR*, 1908-09, pl. XXXVII. It has fallen down from the *śikhara*: see also, Illustration on Chapter II.
12. Bhandarkar, *ASIAR*, 1908-09, p. 103.
13. This has been reported by Bhandarkar as No. 7 temple of the Sun. Cf. Bhandarkar, *ASIAR*, 1908-09, p. 105. The temples from No. 4 to 6 are very small and damaged. They are not described by Bhandarkar.
14. In his list of the temples at Osia, Bhandarkar has assigned No. 9 to this temple. Temple No. 8 is half-buried in the sand and has no extant sculptures. On the basis of the image of Śiva on its lintel, Bhandarkar has called it a Śiva temple. Cf. Bhandarkar, *ASIAR*, 1908-09, p. 107.
15. *Ibid.*
16. Bhandarkar, *ASIAR*, 1908-09, p. 109; P.C. Nāhar, Ed., *Jaina Lekha Sangraha*, Pt. I, Calcutta, 1918, p. 198, No. 805.
17. R.C. Agrawal, "Rājasthān men Jaina Devī Sachchikā Pūjana", *Jaina Antiquary*, XXI, (1), pp. 1-5; Nāhar, *op. cit.*, No. 804.
18. Bhandarkar, *ASIAR*, 1908-09, p. 109.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 110.
20. P. C. Nāhar, "Inscription No. 788, found in the Jaina temple of Mahāvīra (Osia)", *Jaina Lekha Sangraha*, p. 192.
21. Bhandarkar, *ASIAR*, 1908-09, p. 111; J. Fergusson, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture*, Vol. II, p. 56.
22. Jināsena, *Harivaṃśa Purāṇa*, Pannalal Jain Sahityāchārya, 1962, ch. 66, vs. 52, p. 510; R. C. Majumdar, *Age of Imperial Kanauja*, p. 21.
23. G. H. Ojha, *Jodhpur Rājya kā Itihāsa*, Pt. I, p. 29; Percy Brown, *Indian Architecture (Buddhist and Hindu)*, pp. 139-140.
24. M.A. Dhaky, "Temple of Osia", *Journal of Madhya Pradesh Itihāsa Puriṣada*, No. 3, p. 7.
25. Bhandarkar, *ASIAR*, 1908-09, p. 109; R. C. Agrawal, "Rājasthān men Jaina Devī Sachchikā pūjana," *Jaina Antiquary*, Vol. XXI (1), p. 2; Nāhar, *op. cit.*, p. 198, Nos. 804-05.
26. Kakkasuri, *Nābhinandana Jinoddhāra Prabandha*, I, vs. 18-22.
27. See, Pl. I
28. See, Pl. IV

29. See, Pl. IV
30. Bhandarkar, *PRASWC*, 1907, p. 38.
31. R. C. Agrawal, "An Early Pratihāra Temple at Buchkalā", *Bhāratīya Vidyā*, XXVII, Nos. 1-4, pp. 56-57.
32. D. R. Bhandarkar, "Buchkalā Inscription of Nāgabhaṭṭa", *EI*, IX, pp. 198-200.
33. M. A. Dhaky, "Kirādū and the Maru-Gurjara style of Temple Architecture", *Bulletin of American Academy Banaras*, No. 1, 1n.
34. R. C. Agrawal, "Rāmāyaṇa scene in Rajasthan Sculptures", *IHQ*, XXX, No. 2, pp. 154-59.
35. Kakkasuri, *op.cit.*, vs. 44-47.
36. Krishna Deva, *Temples of Northern India*, pp. 32-33.
37. See, Pl. II
38. N. P. Chakravarty, *ASIAR*, 1934-35, pp. 56-57; R. C. Agrawal, "Chittor Durga Ke Pūrvamadyayugīna do mandir", *Varadā*, IX, (4), pp. 7-14.
39. Krishna Deva, *op. cit.*, p. 33.
40. The sculptures of the 15th century A. D., could be easily identified and dated, as all the sculptures of the period of Rāṇā Kumbhā are inscribed with the name of the deity and sometimes with the year of their consecration.
41. D. C. Sircar and V. S. Subramanyam, "Two Inscriptions from Kalyānapur", *EI*, XXXV, p. 56; R. C. Agrawal, "Kalyānapur kā Mahatvapūrṇa Lekha", *Muru Bharati*, IV, (4), 1956-57, pp. 32-33.
42. Sircar and Subramanyam, *op. cit.*, p. 56.
43. *Ibid.*, pp. 57-58; G. H. Ojha, *ARRMA*, 1929, p. 1.
44. D. R. Bhandarkar, "Āṭpur Inscription of Śaktikumār", *Indian Antiquary*, XXXIX, 1910, pp. 186-191.
45. Haldar, *op. cit.*, pp. 161-62; G. H. Ojha, *ARRMA*, 1913-14, No. 1, p. 2. Another inscription of 1001 V. S. refers to the construction of an image of Ādivarāha, probably for a temple of Viṣṇu, by a devotee who styled himself as Ādivarāha; Cf. R. C. Agrawal, "Unpublished temples of Rajasthan", *Arts Asiatiques*, XI, (2), 1965, p. 53.
46. Āhad Museum, Udaipur, Ex. Nos. 125/1, 125/2; See. Pl. III.
47. G. H. Ojha, *Udaipur Rājya kā Itihāsa*, p. 130.
48. R.C. Agrawal, "Unpublished Temples of Rajasthan", *Arts Asiatiques*, XI, (2), 1965, pp. 53-72, figs. 4 and 5.
49. Haldar, *op. cit.*, pp. 161-62.

50. R. C. Agrawal, "Unwās kā Ajāñta Durgā Mandir", *Varadā*, VII, (4), 1964, pp. 9-15.
51. R. C. Agrawal, "Unwās kā Ajāñta Durgā Mandir", *Varadā*, VII, (4), 1964, pp. 9-15; Dasharatha Sharma, "Unwās kā V. S. 1016 kā Śilālekha", *Varadā*, VIII, (1), 1965, pp. 14-16.
52. Haldar, *op. cit.*, pp. 161-62.
53. R. C. Agrawal, "Unpublished Temples of Rajasthan", *Arts Asiatiques*, XI, (2), 1965, p. 56, figs. 13 and 14.
54. R. C. Agrawal, "Inscriptions from Jagat", *JOI*, (Baroda), XIV, (1), September 1964, pp. 75-78.
55. R. C. Agrawal, "Khajuraho of Rajasthan", *Arts Asiatiques*, X, (1), 1964, p. 44.
56. K. V. Soundara Rajan, "A Devi cult Nucleus at Jagat, Rajasthan", *VII*, I, (1), 1963, p. 132.
57. M. A. Dhaky, "Kṣemankarī – the cult image of the Ambikā temple, Jagat", *VII*, VI, 1968, pp. 117-120.
58. See Pl. V
59. "Mīnākṣī Pañchatantra Stotra", Śrī Śamkarāchārya", *Śrī Śāṅkara Granthāvalī*, Vañī Vilās Mudraṇālaya, p. 262, vs. 4.
60. "Śāradā Bhujanga Prayātāṣṭakam", *Śrī Śāṅkara Granthāvalī*, p. 263, vs. 7.
61. *Ibid.*
62. R. C. Agrawal, "Mewār kī Guhila kalā-Kritiyān", *Shodha Patrikā*, XVI, (2), 1965, pp. 23-27.
63. F. Kielhorn, "Udaipur Inscription of Aparājita V. S. 718", *EI*, IV, 1896-97, pp. 29-32. The inscription also refers to a temple of Viṣṇu.
64. R. C. Agrawal, "Nāgdā ke Sās Bahū mandiron kī mahatvapūrṇa pratimāyen", *Shodha Patrikā*, XIII, (4), 1963, pp. 241-49.
65. Bhandarkar, *PRASWC*, 1904-05, pp. 62-63.
66. D. R. Bhandarkar, "An Ekalingaji stone Inscription and the origin and the history of the Lakulīṣa Sect", *JBBRAS*, XXII, pp. 158-167.
67. See, Chapter VI.
68. R. C. Agrawal, "A newly discovered Sun Temple at Tūsa", *Bhāratīya Vidyā*, XXIII, 1963, pp. 56-58, pls. III and VIII.
69. *Ibid.*, pls. II, V, VII.
70. *IAR*, 1958-59, p 63.
71. R. C. Agrawal, "Isrwāl kā Ajāñta Viṣṇu Mandir", *Shodha Patrikā*, XIV, (3), 1963, pp. 195-198.

72. J. F. Fleet, *CII*, Vol. III, pp. 72-78.
73. G. Buhler, "Two Inscriptions from Jhālarāpāṭan", *Indian Antiquary*, V, 1876, p. 180; James Tod had discovered this inscription in the vicinity of the temple of Śītaleśvara Mahādeva at Chandrāvati, but he had interpreted the date and other details wrongly. Cf. Tod, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, pp. 1787-88.
74. Tod and other writers have interpreted Jhālarāpāṭan as "The city of bells" following the legend, that it had 108 temples; but the ruins of Chandrabhāgā do not appear to be of a large number of temples. Cf. Tod, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, pp. 1784.
75. Buhler, *op. cit.*, vs. 3.
76. A. Cunningham, *Report of a Tour in the Punjab and Rajputana* in 1883-84, XXVIII, p. 125.
77. D. R. Bhandarkar, "An Ekalinga Stone Inscription and the Origin and history of the Lakulīṣa Sect", *JBBRAS*, XXII, p. 158.
78. B.N. Reu, *Glories of Marwar and the Glorious Rathors*, Archaeological Department, Jodhpur, 1943, Appendix D., pp. 223-225.
79. Fleet, *CII*, Vol. III, pp. 72-78.
80. *Rajputana Gazetteer*, Vol. II, p. 206.
81. Cunningham, *ASI*, Vol. II, p. 264.
82. Tod, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, pp. 1787-89.
83. D. R. Bhandarkar has given an abstract of the inscriptions found in Jhālarāpāṭan. Cf. *PRASWC*, 1904-05, p. 32; *PRASWC*, 1905-06, p. 56.
84. See, Pl. VI.
85. See, Pl. VII.
86. S. Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, Vol. II, Calcutta, 1946, Pls. XLIII, XLVI, XLVII.
87. F. "Kielhorn," Kansuā Stone Inscription of Śivagaṇa, the Mālava Year 795 expired (738 A.D.), *Indian Antiquary*, XIX, February 1890, pp. 55-62.
88. Tod, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, pp. 1758-63.
89. Deva, *op. cit.*, p. 35.
90. The image has been removed from this temple to the Kota Museum.
91. B. L. Dharma, *ASIAR*, 1925-26, pp. 127-28.
92. Mrs. Jayakara has ascribed some of the sculptures of this temple to Ca. 7th century A.D. Cf. P. Jayakara, "Notes on some Sculptures *in situ* at Ābānerī, Rajasthan," *Lalit Kala*, No. I-II, pp. 139-144; R. C. Agrawal considers them of the 8th-9th century A.D. Cf. R. C. Agrawal, "Sculptures from Ābānerī, Rajasthan," *Lalit Kala*, I-II, 1955-56, pp. 130-135. All these sculptures do not appear to be of one period. Stylistically, none of them seem to be earlier than the 8th century A.D.

93. Deva, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-29.
94. P. Jayakara, *op. cit.*, pls. LX, fig. 2, pl. LXI, fig. 3, pl. LXIII, fig. 8, pl. LXIII, fig. 9; See, Pl. VIII.
95. See Pl. IX.
96. F. Kielhorn, "Harsha Stone Inscription of the Chāhamāna Vigharāja, the year V. S. 1030-973 A.D.", *EI*, II, pp. 117-130; D. R. Bhandarkar, "Harsha Stone Inscription of Vighraha Raja", *Indian Antiquary*, XLII, 1913, pp. 57-64. vs. 2, 3, 9, 12, 30-33, 36, 38 and 42.
- Vs. 3. "Bhinnāvasthaṁ samastaṁ bhavati hi bhuvanaṁ yasya nṛittepravritte
Sa Śrīharṣābhidhāno jayati paśupatirddatta viśvānukampaḥ
- Vs. 9. Devaḥ puradhagadhyāste yamabhrankaṣamuchchakaiḥ
Harṣakhyātiḥ sa harṣākhyo girireṣa punātu vaḥ
- Vs. 12. Etata Śrīrṇṇandakānti pravaratama mahāmaṇḍapa bhogabhadraṁ
prāntaprāsāda mālā virachita vikaṭā pāṇḍu putrābhirāmaḥ
Meroḥ śringopamānaṁ sughaṭita vṛṣa sattoraṇadvāra ramyaṁ
nānāsadbhogayuktaṁ jayati bhagavato Harṣadevasya
- Vs. 30. Bhavarakto bhavattasya śiṣyo dvināmatollataḥ
Vārgatikānvayod bhūta sadviprakula sambhavaḥ
- Vs. 31. Harṣasyāsannato grāmaḥ prasiddho rāṇa pallikā
Sānsārikakulamnāyastato yasya vinirgamaḥ
- Vs. 32. Allaṭachchhadmanā nandī Śivāsanna sthitikramaḥ
Śrīharṣārādhane nūnaṁ svayaṁ marttyamavātarat
- Vs. 33. Ājanmabrahmachārī digmala vasaṇaḥ sānyatātmā tapasvī
Śrī harṣarādhanaika vyasana śubhamatistyakta sansāra mohaḥ
Āsīdyo labdhajanma bhavatrā ṇa dhyaṁ
tenedaṁ dharmivittaiḥ sughaṭita vikaṭaṁ kārītaṁ harṣa harmyaṁ
- Vs. 36. Sadā śiva samākārastasye śvarasamadyutiḥ
Bhāvadyotobhavatchchhiṣyaḥ sandīpita gurukramaḥ
- Vs. 38. Purastāt parvatasyādhastritayaṁ yena kārītaṁ
Satkūpo vāṭika divyā goprapā ghaṭitopalaiḥ
- Vs. 42. Śiva bhavana - - - yadāśīta dakhi
lamupalaughaiḥ pūrayitvā gabhīraṁ
samatala sukha gamyaṁ prāṅgaṇaṁ
tena kāntam masrīnatara śilābhiḥ kārītaṁ bandhayitvā"

97. Sergeant E. Dean, "Notice of the temple called Seo Byjnath (Siva Vaidyanath) discovered on the 3rd December 1834, *JAS*, No. 43, 1835, pp. 361-65.
98. Bhandarkar, *PRASWC*, 1910-11, p. 52.
99. *Ibid.*, p. 53; See Pl. X.
100. See Pl. XII.
101. Bhandarkar, *PRASWC*, 1910-11, p. 53; See Pl. X.
102. R. C. Agrawal, "Harṣanātha Śivālaya kā Garbhagriha", *Varadā*, XI, (1), 1968, pp. 1-3.
103. F. Kielhorn, "Harsha Stone Inscription of the Chāhamāna Vigharāja V.S. 1030", *EI*, II, pp. 117-130, vs. 12.
104. *Ibid.*, vs. 7.
105. *Marg*, XII, March, 1959, p. 70, figs. 5, 6.
106. Kramrisch, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 402-03, Pl. LXVIII.
107. Martin Lerner, "Some Unpublished Sculptures from Harṣagiri", *The Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art*, LVI, 1969, Cleveland, Ohio, pp. 354-365, fig. 1.
108. See Pl. X.
109. R. C. Agrawal, "Sikar Sangrahālaya kī Mahatvapūrṇa Prastara Pratimāyen" *Varadā*, I, (1), 1958, p.p. 5-7.
110. Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, Ex. Nos. 370, I/29; R. C. Agrawal, "Sikar Sangrahālaya kī Mahatvapūrṇa Prastara Pratimāyen", *op. cit.*, SM/32; See also, H. Goetz, "Sūrya as the Supreme Godhead", *P.K. Gode Commemoration Volume*, 1960, Poona, pp. 113-116, fig. 1.
111. The images of Mahiṣamardini and Vaināyaki are kept in a new temple known as Bhairuji. See. Pl. XI.
112. Keilhorn, "Inscription of Mathandeva, V.S. 1016" *EI* III, pp. 263-267; R.L. Mitra, "Donative Inscription from Rajaurgarh near Alwar", *Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1879, pp. 157-163; "Inscription of 979, V.S." *IAR*, 1961-62, p. 85.
113. Krishna Deva, *Proceedings of the Seminar of Indian Art History*, 1962, p. 58.
114. The image is now preserved in the Museum at Alwar. In the inscription only the date V.S. 1010 is legible.
115. F. Kielhorn, "Inscription of Mathanadeva V.S. 1016", *EI*, III, pp. 263-67, Lines 22-24.
116. See Pl. XIII.
117. See Pl. XIV.
118. Cunningham, *Report of a Tour in Eastern Rajputana*, *ASIR*, Vol. XX, Calcutta, 1885, p. 126; P. Jayakar, "Parānagar", *Marg*, XII, (2) 1959, p. 61.

119. Cunningham, *Report of a Tour in Eastern Rajputana*, *ASIR*, Vol. XX, 1882-83, pp. 60-79.
120. R. D. Banerjee, "The Bayānā Inscription of Chitrakhā V.S. 1012", *EI*, XXII, pp. 120-127.
121. Cunningham, *Report of a Tour in Eastern Rajputana*, *ASIR*, Vol. XX, pp. 60-79.
122. J. F. Fleet, "Bayānā Stone Inscription of Adhiraj Vijaya, V.S. 1100", *Indian Antiquary*, XIV, pp. 9-10.
123. Pt. Bhagwan Lal Indraji, "Inscription from Kāmā or Kāmavana", *Indian Antiquary*, X, 1881, pp. 34-36; D. C. Sircar, "Three Inscriptions from Rajasthan", *EI*, XXXVI, p. 52.
124. Two such Śiva *lingas* are preserved in the Rajputana Museum, Ajmer. Ex. Nos. I (26) 15 and I (26) 16.
125. D. C. Sircar, "Three Inscriptions from Rajasthan", *op. cit.* p. 54.





3

Vaiṣṇava Themes

The term Vaiṣṇavism is used for the cult in which the main object of worship is Viṣṇu. Vaiṣṇavism originated from the worship of human heroes such as Vāsudeva, Saṁkarṣaṇa and others of the Vriṣṇi clan.¹ In the beginning, Vaiṣṇavism was known as the Bhāgavata² as mentioned in the epigraphs³ of the Gupta period as well as the *Bṛihat Samhita*⁴ (ca. 5th century A.D.). Later on, it was known as Pañcharātra, Sattvata, etc.

Since the Vedic period, the cult of Vaiṣṇavism has undergone many modifications. In the *Rigveda*, Viṣṇu, the solar deity, occupied a subordinate position among the gods. The emergence of this Vedic deity as an important god in the 5th century B.C., has been fully traced and investigated by many scholars.

As the Upaniṣadic speculations failed to fulfil the practical needs of ordinary people,⁵ there arose in the 5th century B.C., a religion of an adorable object with a distinct personality. The founders of this religion were human heroes of the Vriṣṇi clan. This is evident from the epigraphs of Besānagar (Vidiśā, M.P., 2nd century B.C.),⁶ Ghosunḍī (Chittor, Rajasthan, 2nd century B.C.)⁷ and Morā Well (Mathura, U.P., 1st century A.D.).⁸ These inscriptions tell us that the followers of Vāsudeva, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Aniruddha, Pradyumna and Sāmba were known as the Bhāgavatas during the pre-Christian period.⁹ They also indicate that Vāsudeva and Saṁkarṣaṇa were worshipped¹⁰ and their images were consecrated in the Nārāyaṇa Vāṭikā at Mādhyamikā (Chittor, Rajasthan)¹¹ and at Morā, near Mathura.¹² A column bearing a Garuḍadhvaja was erected in front of the temple of Bhāgavata at Besanagar by Heliodorus, a Bhāgavata.¹³

The worship of these heroes is confirmed by the discovery of an inscribed image of ca. 1st century B.C., of Viṣṇu holding a *chakra* and a *gada*.¹⁴ Among these heroes, Vāsudeva Kriṣṇa had achieved so much importance that the heroes of the other clans and tribes were identified with him. The reference to the followers of Vāsudeva and Arjuna in the *Aṣṭadhyāyī*¹⁵ shows that Pāṇini knew about these hero-gods. Among them Arjuna was of lesser importance and hence the Ārjunāyanas were absorbed into the fold of the

worshippers of Vāsudeva. Later on, Vāsudeva-Kṛiṣṇa was identified with Viṣṇu, the Vedic solar deity, and Nārāyaṇa of the Upaniṣadic period.¹⁶ At the beginning of the Christian era Gopāla-Kṛiṣṇa, the cow-herd hero of the Ābhīra tribe, was incorporated within the fold of Vaiṣṇavism due to his features¹⁷ in common with Vāsudeva-Kṛiṣṇa. The epigraph of Besanagar clearly shows that by 150 B.C., Vāsudeva was fully identified with Viṣṇu. The erection of the Garuḍa column of Vāsudeva by Heliodorus, the Bhāgavata, points out that Garutmān, who was associated with Viṣṇu, also found a place in the temple of Vāsudeva. The *Mahābhārata* states that Vāsudeva became Viṣṇu and measured the universe. This clearly reveals the association of Vāsudeva with the Vedic Viṣṇu.¹⁸ The Ghosunḍī epigraph mentioning the installation of the images of Saṁkarṣaṇa and Vāsudeva in the Nārāyaṇa Vāṭika at Madhyamika testifies that Vāsudeva was also known as Nārāyaṇa.¹⁹

Thus Vaiṣṇavism in the early stages of its development was a synthesis between the different sects. Mathura was the main centre of the Vāsudeva-Saṁkarṣaṇa cult. From here, it spread to the regions of Rajasthan,²⁰ Madhya Pradesh²¹ and other parts of the country. With the growth of Vaiṣṇavism, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Sāmba were amalgamated with Vāsudeva-Viṣṇu to such an extent that they were considered his emanations (*vyūhas*).

I

Representation of the Vyūhas in Sculpture

The *Vyūhas* – Saṁkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Sāmba – constitute the four emanatory forms of Viṣṇu. The number of these emanations increased from four to twenty four,²² during the post-Gupta period.²³ It is because of this reason that the twenty four *vyūhas* of Viṣṇu were not represented in sculpture before this period. The texts of the Gupta period such as the *Bṛihat Samhitā* (ca. 5th century A.D.) give an account of the carving of the images of Viṣṇu²⁴ and his early emanations viz., Saṁkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Sāmba.²⁵ The discovery of the images of twenty-four *vyūhas* in the later part of the 10th

century A.D., indicate the beginning of their sculptural representation during the post-Gupta period. Iconographical texts like the *Chaturvarga Chintāmaṇi*,²⁶ the *Devatāmārti Prakaraṇa*²⁷ and the *Rūpamaṇḍana*²⁸ written between the 13th and 15th centuries A.D., also confirm this fact. These iconographical texts and the *Purāṇas*²⁹ characterised the twenty four *vyūhas* by altering the order of the four attributes, i.e., the *śankha*, the *chakra*, the *gada* and the *padma* in the four hands of the image of Viṣṇu.

Vyūha Images in Rajasthan

In Rajasthan, the extant images of twenty-four *vyūhas* also belong to the later part of 10th or 11th century A.D. These images were never accorded any important place in the sculptures of the temples, as can be seen from their diminutive size and the place of their representation. In the Vaiṣṇava temples, they generally constitute the *prabhāvalī* of the Viṣṇu image, the lintel, the door jambs and the pillars. The sculptures of Adhokṣaja, Padmānābha and Puruṣottama, now preserved in the Kota Museum,³⁰ belong to the late 10th and 11th centuries A.D. They are smaller in size and are about 2 feet in height. The door jambs of the temples at Nāgdā (Śās temple), and Bagherā (ca. late 10th century A.D.)³¹ and the *prabhāvalī* of the image of Viṣṇu at Iṣwāl³² represent some images of the *vyūhas*.

II

Incarnations of Viṣṇu

The *vyūha* aspect was developed to represent the doctrinal tenets of Vaiṣṇavism, while the incarnatory aspect was evolved to show Viṣṇu as the saviour of the common people. It was because of this reason that into the incarnatory aspect were embraced other religious, historical, political and mythical heroes from time to time. Perhaps, this is also the reason for the variations in the number of the incarnations in different *Purāṇas* or sometimes in the same *Purāṇa*.

The incarnations of Viṣṇu could be classified on the basis of their purpose and form. According to the purpose, they could

be classified in two forms : (i) the *Parṇāvatāra*—when the god incarnates for the whole life, and (ii) the *Amśāvatāra*—when the god incarnates temporarily to achieve a purpose.³³

In view of the form of their representation in sculpture, the incarnations could be classified broadly into three categories : (a) the animal form, (b) the hybrid or therianthropic form, and (c) the human form. They represent a fish and a tortoise in animal form on the lotus leaf, Varāha and Narasimha in therianthropic form, Vāmana in dwarf form and others as Balarāma, Paraśurāma, etc., in full human form. These three forms of the incarnations are represented in two types of sculptures. One is the stereotyped manner in which the Daśāvatāras are represented on slabs of the lintels, door jambs, pillars and on *prabhavālī* of the Viṣṇu image.³⁴ Two, they are represented separately in the temples on the exterior of the base and in the principal niches of the exterior of the sanctum.

(A) Animal Incarnations

The animal incarnations hold an important place in religion as is known from the Epics and the *Purāṇas*. Some of the *Purāṇas* were even dedicated to them. Guided by the general ethos of their times, the sculptors represented the Paurāṇic and Epic narratives into stone. The representations of the incarnations in the narrative style even in the limited space of a niche was perhaps due to the popularity of the Paurāṇic themes. The preference for the depiction of the whole narrative in sculpture could be gleaned from the early reliefs at Sānci and Bhārhut. The representation of the narratives in sculpture became prominent in the Gupta and post-Gupta periods. After the 10th century A.D., the independent iconographic texts were composed on the basis of the Paurāṇic stories. It is because of the popularity of the Paurāṇic narratives with the sculptors that the incarnations of Viṣṇu even in the animal forms were carved; otherwise animals like the fish and the tortoise in themselves would not have held the interest and imagination of the sculptors.

(i) *Matsya Incarnation* :—In sculpture, the Matsyāvatāra is represented by a fish placed on the lotus leaf or on a *kalpalata* motif. Sometimes, it is shown as symbolising the four Vedas.³⁵ It is akin to the description of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. Another type of carving of this theme is in a purely therianthropic form. It is a rare variety, where the figure of Viṣṇu with weapons is shown issuing out of a fish³⁶ or a fish is shown in front of the seated Viṣṇu.³⁷

In Rajasthan, a peculiar type of sculpture (ca. 10th century A.D.) representing a fish in its natural form on a *kalpalata* is found among the ruins of the Vaiṣṇava temple at Āhaḍ (Udaipur). The significance of this image lies in the depiction of the four emblems of Viṣṇu—the *gadā*, the *akṣamālā*, the *chakra* and the *śankha*. A fish is carved on the top of the *kalpavrikṣa*. Here, the sculptor has imagined an image of Viṣṇu standing, with four hands holding four emblems. On the top of the *prabhāvalī* is carved a *kīrttimukha* and below it are carved the *Āyudhapuruṣas* in dwarfish form.³⁸ On both its sides are carved the *gajamukhas* and *vyālas*. Another sculpture of a similar size and of the same description is found at the same place with one main difference in that here the fish is replaced by a tortoise.³⁹ These sculptures probably belonged to the temple of Ādivarāha which was built in V.S. 1010 at Āhaḍ by the Guhila ruler Allāṭa.⁴⁰

(ii) *Kūrma Incarnation* :—In sculpture, the incarnation of Kūrma is represented generally in two forms : (i) It is depicted in its actual form, and (ii) in half-man and half-tortoise form. The representation of the latter form is confined only to South India,⁴¹ whereas the depiction of the former is more frequent in North India than South India.

In sculpture, the Kūrma incarnation characteristically illustrates the Paurāṇic narrative of the churning of the ocean. In Rajasthan, the earliest example of this theme is found in the Kālikāmātā temple (ca. 8th century A.D.), Chittorgarh.⁴² Here, the sea is conceived in a waterpot, which is kept on the back of the tortoise; a pillar is carved coming out of the pot and the figure of Lakṣmī is shown seated on the top of the pillar. On either side

of the pillar are carved the figures of demons and gods. The representation of the same theme is also found in the sculptures of the later part of the 10th and 11th centuries A.D. Such sculptures have been discovered from the ruins of the *nāṭya maṇḍapa* of the temple at Jagat (ca. 10th century A.D.) and in the Someśvara temple at Kirāḍu (ca. 11th century A.D.).⁴³ In these reliefs Viṣṇu is shown twice, once as a tortoise, and again, in the centre, holding a shaft. In these examples, the theme is depicted in a panel instead of a rectangular niche.

(iii) *Varāha Incarnation* :—The origin of Varāha worship can be traced to the pre-Vedic period. Prof. J. Gonda has shown the universal popularity of the mythological legends of Varāha and the Earth goddess among the agriculturists.⁴⁴ Here, Varāha is associated with the concept of fertility. The *Atharvaveda* also refers to the association of Varāha with the Earth goddess: *Varāheṇa prithivī samvidāna śūkarāya vijihīte mrigāya*⁴⁵. It has been traced to the *Rigveda* where *Emūṣa Varāha* is described as taking away the sacrifice.⁴⁶

The myth of Varāha received a new impetus during the 8th and 10th centuries A.D. The name of Varāha was used as a favourite epithet for the rulers of the Gupta and the Pratihāra dynasties. The *Mudra Rākṣasa* (ca. 7th century A.D.) refers to Chandragupta as Varāha in his act of freeing the Earth goddess from foreign enemies.⁴⁷ In the post-Gupta period, this political imagery was again used by the Pratihāra king, Bhoja on his coins of *Śrīmadadivarāha*.

The representation of the incarnation of Varāha in sculpture is found mainly in two forms: (a) the Zoomorphic form and (b) the Hybrid form.

(a) *Zoomorphic Form* :—The sculptural representation of Varāha in its natural form was also very popular during this period. In this form, its whole body is covered with divine figures and other beings. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* also states that there should be images of gods and ascetics depicted in every pore of its body.⁴⁸ An inscribed image of Varāha from Eran (M.P.) represents all the beings of

the *trailokya*.⁴⁹ A similar description is also found in an inscription of the Kākatiya dynasty from Kāñchīpura. The inscription describes the body of Varāha as comprising mountains, streams, elephants of the quarters, the oceans, all human beings of the three worlds, *Siddhas*, *Sādhyas*, *Nāgas*, *Yakṣas*, *Chandra* and *Surya*.⁵⁰ This sort of description of Varāha in animal form in South India was perhaps the result of contacts with North India as the representation of its animal form in sculpture was not prevalent there.⁵¹

In the animal form, Varāha also represents the idea of Vedic sacrifice. In this form, it is conceived as the personification of sacrifice in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*. Its tusks are illustrated as the *Yapastambha*, its four feet as the four *Vedas*, its tongue as the fire of sacrifice and the bristles on its body are described as the *Kuśa*. The Earth goddess is depicted standing by its side mainly to show that Varāha is her redeemer.

In Rajasthan, the zoomorphic image of Varāha (ca. 10th century A.D.) carved out of a blue stone has been discovered from the ruins of the temples at Chandrabhāgā.⁵² It has a four-armed figure of serpent-Śeṣa lying in front of Varāha. Here, the representation of Bhūdevī as clinging to the tusk of Varāha and the colour of the body of Varāha as blue corresponds to the description of *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*.⁵³ The image of Varāha in this form was more vividly represented in the 10th century A.D. An image of Varāha discovered from Nāgdā⁵⁴ shows a *śankha* and a *chakra* under its front feet and Bhūdevī is depicted as standing on its left side. The *gada* is shown lying between its legs. In some sculptures, now preserved in the Rajputana Museum, a serpent is shown lying between its feet.⁵⁵

The tradition of depicting the theme of Varāha in detail continued to the 12th century as is evidenced from its image discovered from Arthūrā (ca. 12th century A.D.).⁵⁶ However, the sculpture shows definite signs of deterioration in the carving. Here, the sculptor has failed to show any delicacy, emotion or expression in the figures of Varāha and Bhūdevī.

(B) Hybrid form

The incarnations of Viṣṇu are also represented in the hybrid form in which case the hybridity lies in the head alone, the rest of the body being shown in human form.

(i) *Varāha in hybrid form* :—In the hybrid form Varāha is represented with the boar's head and the human body, holding the emblems of Viṣṇu in his hands, keeping his foot on the coils of the serpent, which signify the nether regions. Śeṣanāga is represented in human form paying obeisance to the god. The god is depicted as raising the Earth on one hand or on his left shoulder. Except in some early images,⁵⁷ he is always carved as four-handed, holding with his right hand the tails of the nāga.⁵⁸ His two rear hands hold the attributes of Viṣṇu.

The representation of the images of Varāha in this manner presents a combination of movements in opposite directions. The figure of Varāha is shown coming upward with a force, while with his foot he is treading the serpent and the nether regions. The maturity in the depiction of these contrasting movements was achieved in the post-Gupta period. In the 8th century A.D., the images of Varāha depict the creatures of water and Bhūdevī as making efforts to balance this forceful movement.⁵⁹ The balance in the opposing movements is shown by the depiction of Bhūdevī as leaning towards the snout of Varāha for support, as if she is slipping from the grasp of Varāha. Śrīharṣa also portrays a similar picture of the Varāha legend in the *Naiṣadhacharita*. He describes Bhūdevī as slipping from the grasp of Varāha, while she is being elevated from the nether world : *Uddhritiskhaladilāparirambhāllomabhirbahiritairbahu hriṣṭaiḥ*.⁶⁰

In Rajasthan, the sculpture of Varāha at the Jhālāwār Museum⁶¹ artistically presents this movement of opposite direction in the body of Varāha. There the image of Bhūdevī also shows that she is making an effort to balance and bear the momentum of the upheaval. The whole body of Varāha shows an upward movement except his right foot, which he is pressing downwards.

The sculptures of the later period show a marked deterioration in the representation of the Varāha legend. In these sculptures the representation of the momentum of upheaval can only be seen in the figure of Varāha, while the Earth goddess unaffected by it is shown standing in the *samapādasthānaka mudrā* or seated on the arm of Varāha in a relaxing mood.⁶²

(ii) *Narasimha Incarnation* :—The Narasimha incarnation was also represented in a hybrid form, in which only the face is that of a lion with a shaggy mane while the other parts of the body are human.

The worship of the lion like that of the other animals like the elephant, boar, etc., was perhaps the result of the assimilation of non-Aryan religious concepts. Goetz ascribes it to the Scythian influence.⁶³ The earliest reference to the *Nrisimha* legend is found in the *Taittiriya Āraṇyaka*,⁶⁴ where he is invoked in a *Gāyatrī mantra* along with other divinities. The earliest reference to Narasimha is found in the *Mahābhārata*,⁶⁵ but it does not state the main features of his physical hybridity in sculpture. In the *Harivaṃśa Purāṇa*⁶⁶ he is conceived as half man and half lion. The *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*⁶⁷ prescribes that his body should be of a man and the head of a lion. The *Matsya Purāṇa* vividly describes the combat between the demon and the god. It states : *Yudhyamānaścha kartavyaḥ kvachitkaraṇabandhanaiḥ, Pariśrāntena daityena tajjayemāno muhurmuhaḥ, Daityaṃ pradarśayettatra khaḍgaketakadhāriṇaṃ*.⁶⁸ The *Brahmaṇḍa Purāṇa* also refers to images which depict the struggle between Narasimha and the demon : *Tataḥ saḥ bāhuyuddhena daityendram taṃ mahābalaṃ, Nakhairvibheda saṃkruddho nārdrāḥ śuṣkaḥ nakha iti*.⁶⁹

These *Purāṇas* emphasize that the images of Narasimha should be carved in the following two ways : First, the images representing Narasimha as tearing off the intestines of the demon with two hands and his other two hands holding the attributes of Viṣṇu – the *gada* and the *chakra*. In North India, this type of image of Narasimha has been found in large numbers. In such images, Narasimha with a flying mane stands in a *aliḍha* pose adorned with

all ornaments and is shown tearing the stomach of the demon with his sharp nails. It is a traditional and stereotyped representation which is described in all the Paurāṇic texts.

Secondly, the *Purāṇas* emphasize the carving of the images representing the combat between the demon and Narasimha. In this type, the demon is depicted holding the *khadga* and the *khetaka* in two hands and fighting Narasimha with the other two hands.⁷⁰ Images of this type are also found in sculptures of the late 10th century A. D., in Northern India and specially in Rajasthan. In Northern India, examples of this type are found in Manora⁷¹ (Madhya Pradesh), Khajurāho⁷² and Ellora.⁷³ Among these the sculptures from Manora and Khajurāho also represent the fight in a manner similar to those found in Rajasthan. However, the sculpture from Ellora depicts it somewhat in a different manner. In Rajasthan, in the Vaiṣṇava temple at Jhālarāpātan,⁷⁴ there is an image (ca. 10th century A.D.) of this type. It is in the principal niche on the southern exterior of the sanctum. Here, the demon is shown wrestling with the god who has caught hold of his hands, while their legs are interlocked. Two sculptures of Narasimha are found in the ruins of the temples at Parānagar (Alwar) which depict the legend in a similar manner. Here, the image of Narasimha is adorned with many arms and attributes, but his two real hands are shown engaged in fighting. The *Sās* temple at Nāgdā also preserves two examples of this legend. One is carved on the pillar of the *gudhamandapa* and the other on the doorframe of the *garbhagriha*. It is true that these sculptures are very small but they confirm the popularity of the depiction of the legend in stone. This also shows the predilections of the artists of the post-Gupta period for the Paurāṇic narratives rather than for the depiction of images in accordance with the iconographic texts.

However, there is a difference between these sculptures of Rajasthan and that of Ellora.⁷⁵ In the former, emphasis is laid on the depiction of the struggle. The demon is shown wrestling and overlapping the figure of Narasimha. In the latter they are carved fighting but facing the spectator. The aggressive attitude of Narasimha and the defensive attitude of the demon are visible there.

In Rajasthan the sculptures of Narasimha are fewer in number than those of Varāha, Trivikrama, Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa and the other images of Viṣṇu. Banerjea considers this to be due to the unpopularity of Narasimha incarnation with the Vaiṣṇava devotees. The reason he gives for this is preference of the Vaiṣṇava devotees for the pacific aspects over the terrific aspect of Narasimha.⁷⁶ This argument does not seem convincing for many reasons. First, if this was really the case then another type of Narasimha-image depicting only the struggle-aspect in a subdued manner should have become more popular. Secondly, ample examples of the terrific form of Narasimha are found in literature and inscriptions, which show the popularity of the Narasimha legend even with the Vaiṣṇava devotees. For instance, Bhāsa⁷⁷ refers to the terrific aspect of Narasimha when he destroys the demon. Bāṇabhaṭṭa also refers to this aspect of Viṣṇu, while comparing Śūdraka with Narasimha.⁷⁸ The inscription from Sirpur of the 8th century A.D.,⁷⁹ narrates the same aspect. The inscription of Paramāra king Siyaka, a Vaiṣṇava devotee,⁸⁰ also mentions the flame-like manes and the blood-red eyes of Narasimha. These examples are evidence of the fact that the worship of the terrific aspect of Narasimha was popular with the Vaiṣṇava devotees during this period.

In fact, the reason for the Narasimha legend being less popular in sculpture was the preference of the sculptors for the dramatic legend. The dramatic action in a legend attracted them more than the stereotyped depiction. The sculptor found more scope in representing the legends of Varāha and Trivikrama than the man-lion myth. Similarly, the depiction of the Vāmana form in sculpture is less prevalent than the Trivikrama image as the latter has dramatic appeal, while the former lacks it.

(C) Human Incarnations

Among the human incarnations of Viṣṇu, the Vāmana-Trivikrama is the most important form of representation in sculpture.

(i) *Vāmana-Trivikrama Incarnation* :—The origin of Vāmana is traced to the *Rigveda*, where Viṣṇu has been invoked

by various names such as *Trivikrama*, *urugāya*, etc., *Idam viṣṇurvichakrame tredhā nidadhe padam*.⁸¹ The legend of the Trivikrama incarnation is associated with the name of Viṣṇu from the beginning of the Vedic period.

In sculpture, the narrative of this incarnation is represented differently in two types : (a) the Vāmana aspect and (b) the Trivikrama aspect.

(a) Vāmana :—The Vāmana form of Viṣṇu is generally represented with four hands holding the attributes of Viṣṇu or in the dress of a *brahmachārī* holding a *kamaṇḍalu*, an umbrella and a *daṇḍa*.

However, some of the iconographic texts like the *Vaikhānasāgama* lay stress on his dwarfish form with two hands and prescribe the *yuvākumāra* form for his representation. He is represented as: *Atha Vāmanam pañchatālamitīm dvibhujam chhatradanḍadharam kaupīnavāsasam śikhā pustakamekhalopavīta kṛṣṇājinasamāyutam pavitrapāṇim balarūpam brahmavarchasyinam kārayet*.⁸² This representation of Vāmana corresponds exactly to the description of the *Matsya Purāṇa* : *Sa vāmano jaṭi daṇḍi chhatrī dhritakamaṇḍaluḥ, Sarvadevamayobhūya baleradhvaramabhyagāt*.⁸³ These texts have given more importance to the effective representation of the narrative rather than to the divinity of Viṣṇu. The purpose of the incarnation was to delude the demons and, therefore, he did not expose the divinity.

Some of the other texts lay stress on the representation of Vāmana with physical deformity. The *Devatāmūrti prakaraṇa* and the *Śilpa Ratna* state that he should be carved with a hunch-back.⁸⁴ Similarly, Hemādri states that he should be represented as a deformed dwarf with a hunch-back, protruding joints of bones and a big belly, holding a *daṇḍa* and a deer-skin.

The image of Vāmana is often depicted on the *prabhāvalī* of the image of Viṣṇu, or on the *Daśavatāra* panels of the lintels on the door way. In Rajasthan his images depicted independently are fewer in number than the Trivikrama images. An image of Vāmana in the temple at Bāḍolī (Kota)⁸⁵ depicts him in the *sthānaka* posture

like the other images of Viṣṇu. The *prabhamaṇḍala* is decorated with the Āyudhapuruṣas and other incarnations of Viṣṇu. Vāmana is shown with four arms and adorned with a flowing *kinjalkinī* and other ornaments. Another speciality of the image is that the dwarf figure of Vāmana is represented as well-proportioned which is similar to the description of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*. He is shown as a *brahmachārī*, having the *jaṭa* devoid of *kirīṭa* : *Rapānurāpā-vayavaṁ tasmā āsanamāharata*.⁸⁶

Some images represent Vāmana in the dwarfish form as a *brahmachārī*, holding an umbrella and an *akṣamālā*. An image of Vāmana, depicting these characteristics is preserved in the Rajasthan Government Museum, Jaipur.⁸⁷ Another image of this type is in the National Museum, New Delhi.⁸⁸

(b) *Trivikrama* :—In the Trivikrama sculptures, Viṣṇu is represented in his Virāṭarūpa, standing firmly on one foot⁸⁹ and measuring the universe with the other raised foot. These sculptures, generally, narrate the whole theme of the Vāmana avatāra. They show the figures of Vāmana and Trivikrama along with those of Bali and his queen Namuchi and Garuḍa. Here, Vāmana is always depicted as two-armed, dressed like a student and standing before Bali, who is represented as pouring the ceremonial waters. All these figures are carved in the space below the upraised foot of Trivikrama. In this aspect, Trivikrama is conceived as the *Sarvadevamaya*⁹⁰ form of Viṣṇu, therefore, all the *āyudhas* are shown in his hands and the other gods are represented as watching the event of measuring the Universe.

The sculptural representations of Viṣṇu in the Vāmana form are rare⁹¹ in comparison with the Trivikrama form. This is because the dwarfish form of Vāmana did not attract much of the attention of the sculptors. The actual purpose of the narrative is in itself lost if the image of Vāmana is carved in the deified form. There are many references in literature, which glorify the aspect of Trivikrama rather than that of Vāmana. Bhāsa in the invocatory verse of the *Madhyama Vyāyoga* while invoking the blessings of Trivikrama, describes his raised foot as : *pādo hareḥ kuvalayāmālā khadgaṇīlah, yaḥ prodyatastribhuvana kramāṇe rarāja, Vaidurya*

saṁkrama ivāmbara sāgarasya.⁹² Similarly, for the completion of his work the *Daśakumāracharita*,⁹³ Daṇḍī seeks the blessings of his raised foot. The worship of Trivikrama was performed by kings at the commencement of the military expedition.⁹⁴

There is an image of Trivikrama in every Vaiṣṇava Temple at Osia. The image of Trivikrama is shown with four hands, standing on the right leg, while the left leg is stretched up to the level of the forehead thrusting it into a grinning face of Rāhu. It reminds one the description of Śrīharṣa, *pade te kiṁ lagannajani rāhurupānat*.⁹⁵ Probably, Śrīharṣa was influenced by such sculptures while writing this description.

(ii) *Other Human Incarnations* :—Among the other human incarnations of Viṣṇu, Paraśurāma, Dāśarathī Rāma and Balarāma form a minor group in the sculptures of the post-Gupta period.

(a) *Paraśurāma* :—Iconographically also, there is not much difference in the representation of these three 'Rāmas'. Among them, Paraśurāma was distinguished by his *paraśu*, Rāma by a bow and an arrow, and Balarāma by his plough-share and a mace.⁹⁶ Sometimes, they were also depicted with four hands holding the attributes of Viṣṇu. Like in other parts of India the sculptural representation of the story of Paraśurāma is rarely found in Rajasthan.

(b) *Dāśarathī Rāma* :—The story of Rāma does not find an important place in the sculptures of the post-Gupta period in Rajasthan. Though this legend was a favourite subject of poets, it did not hold the interest of the sculptors. Some examples of the Rāmāyaṇa scenes are found in the temples at Kekind and Kirāḍū (ca. 11th century A.D.), in Marwar.⁹⁷ These reliefs are not good examples of workmanship. They lack expression, dramatic rhythm and are of a very late period.

Separate images of these human incarnations are rarely carved. They are depicted with two hands in the Daśavatāra panels or on the *prabhavalis* only. It is surprising that the temples in Rajasthan of the Pratihāra period have no separate sculptures of

Rāma, though the Gurjara-Pratihāra rulers traced their lineage from Lakṣmaṇa, who bore this name for being the *pratihāra* of his brother Rāma : *Svabhṛātra Rāmabhadrasya prātihāryam kritam yataḥ, śrīpratihāravamśo ayaṁ*.⁹⁸

Balarāma :—Though Balarāma or Saṁkarṣaṇa is of an earlier origin, and associated with the *pañcha-vīras* of the Vṛiṣṇi clan, he is rarely worshipped independently in the post-Gupta period. He is represented in the sculptures depicting the life of Kṛiṣṇa. In the Vaiṣṇava temples, he is carved with his consort on the exterior.

The literary and archaeological references to the images of Balarāma are of an earlier period than that of Kṛiṣṇa. The earliest image of Balarāma of the 2nd century A.D., was discovered at Mathura, while the earliest image of Kṛiṣṇa found at the same place belongs to a century later.⁹⁹ Here, Balarāma is represented with a serpent hood, holding in both his hands *musala* and *hala* and wearing only one *kuṇḍala*. The continuity of the tradition of carving his image facilitated the task of setting the details of his iconographical representation. The *Bṛihat Saṁhitā* has prescribed that the image of Balarāma should hold a plough-share, he should wear only one *kuṇḍala* and his eyes intoxicated with wine, should be round and rolling.¹⁰⁰

This line of representation is followed in the sculptures of Balarāma of the post-Gupta period. Examples are found depicting him under the canopy of five or seven serpent hoods. The *āsavapāyī* aspect of his personality is emphasized by carving a wine cup in his hand. An example of such an image is carved in the Sun-temple at Osia. Here, Balarāma is shown holding a *musala* in one hand and a wine-cup in another and leaning on the shoulder of the attendant, who is standing with a decanter in his hand.¹⁰¹ Another example¹⁰² showing Balarāma wearing only one *kuṇḍala* is carved in the Vaiṣṇava temples at Osia. Here, also his addiction to wine is indicated by a cup in one of his hands and an attendant with a decanter. On the exterior of the Vaiṣṇava temple of Kumbha Shyāma (ca. 8th century A.D.) at Chittorgarh, Balarāma is represented with his consort Revatī. Here, too the *āsavapāyī* aspect of his

personality is emphasized. Another sculpture (ca. 8th century A.D.) now preserved in the Rajputana Museum, Ajmer represents him holding a cup of wine and leaning on his wife.¹⁰³

These examples are enough to suggest that the *āsavapayī* aspect of Balarāma's character was worshipped and represented in the sculptures during the 7th and 8th centuries A.D. This is also substantiated by a reference in the inscription of 788 A.D., which records an endowment of two *chaṭṭikās* (pitchers) of Vāruṇī to the temple of Viṣṇu at Tasāi (Alwar)¹⁰⁴ on the 12th day of the dark half of every month. The gift of wine, *guggulu*, oil and saffron for the worship of Viṣṇu shows the impact of the *tantric* mode of worship. These examples are sufficient to indicate that in the 8th century A.D., the independent worship of Balarāma was not prevalent, though his image was placed on the exterior niches of the Vaiṣṇava temples.

Kriṣṇa :—The sculptural representations of the life and exploits of the childhood days of Kriṣṇa were popular in the early centuries of the Christian era. The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* and the *Harivaṃśa Purāṇa* relate these legends of Gopāla Kriṣṇa in detail. The former clearly states that the nomadic tribe of the Ābhīras were the devotees of Vāsudeva-Kriṣṇa. Mathura being the stronghold of this cult, the earliest examples of sculpture depicting the life of Kriṣṇa are found there. The earliest of them is of his birth which is now preserved in the Mathura Museum.¹⁰⁵ It depicts Vāsudeva crossing the river with the infant Kriṣṇa on his head in a winnowing-basket. Earlier only some episodes of the life of Kriṣṇa were represented in sculptures. Among them the Govardhandhara episode was most popular. In Rajasthan, the earliest sculptural example of this episode belongs to the beginning of the Gupta period¹⁰⁶ which was discovered from the excavations at Suratgarh (Bikaner).¹⁰⁷

As the cycle of legends relating to Kriṣṇa's adventures of childhood and youth were finalised during the Gupta period,¹⁰⁸ they began to be represented on one panel. In Rajasthan, the

earliest sculptural representation of these legends has been discovered on the two pillars of a temple at Maṇḍor (Jodhpur, ca. 4th century A.D.). One of the pillars depicts Kṛṣṇa lifting the Govardhana, Yaśodā churning the curd, the infant Kṛṣṇa lying with his mother and the upturning of Śakāṭa with his tiny legs. The other pillar is mutilated and only the scenes of *talavana*, *Dhenukavadha* and the subjugation of Kālīya are visible there.¹⁰⁹

In the post-Gupta period the sculptures depicting the scenes of the life of Kṛṣṇa from his birth to the exploits of his youth are represented on the exterior walls of the sanctum in the temples of Rajasthan. The temples at Osia need special mention as these scenes are represented more profusely there than in the temples at Kekind, Aṭrū, Āhaḍ¹¹⁰ and Ābānerī.¹¹¹ They are noteworthy for the representation of the Kṛṣṇalīlā scenes in a chronological order in long friezes on the upper side of the *jangha* cornice. The representation begins from one side of the doorway and ends on the other side.

On the exterior of the sanctum of the Vaiṣṇava temples at Osia are carved some of the most popular incidents of the infancy of Kṛṣṇa. They depict incidents about his birth, the exchange of the children, Kāṁsa throwing the daughter of Nanda on a stone, Pūtānā-vadha, Śakāṭa-bhanga, Triṇāvartta-vadha and other family scenes of Nanda Yaśodā and Kṛṣṇa.

In these scenes, Kṛṣṇa is invariably shown as a child, wearing only a *mekhalā* and *nūpura*. The age and other minor details of the scenes as described in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* are always kept in view. For instance, at the time of Śakāṭa-bhanga and Pūtānā-vadha¹¹² Kṛṣṇa is shown as an infant. In the reliefs of Pūtānā-vadha, Kṛṣṇa is depicted as a nude baby, sucking the breasts of Pūtānā, while she is shown lifting her hands in a gesture of mortal agony. Similarly, the family scenes represent Nanda seated on a stool, Yaśodā churning curd and Kṛṣṇa as a child crawling near the jar of curd.

The scenes relating to the childhood and youth of Kṛṣṇa are also represented in a realistic manner.¹¹³ Among them the

Yamalarjuna-uddhāra, the slaying of Vatsāsura, Dhenuka, Keśi and other demons, the subjugation of Kālīya¹¹⁴ and the uplifting of Govardhana¹¹⁵ are related to his childhood, while the scenes of slaying of Kuvalayāpīḍa, the fight with the wrestlers of Kāmsa and the Rāsālīlā are associated with his youth.

In the wrestling scene he is shown as a youth with two arms but with no weapons or ornaments on his person. In the relief of Kuvalayāpīḍa-vadha, Kṛiṣṇa and Balarāma are not shown as divine beings but as human heroes.¹¹⁶ Kṛiṣṇa is represented as struggling with a mad elephant, while Balarāma is standing in a dancing pose with a serpent hood. Both of them are dressed like wrestlers with close-fitting upper and lower garments, and devoid of ornaments except for *kunḍalas*.

These sculptural representations of the scenes of Kṛiṣṇalīlā on the exterior of the sanctum of the temples at Osia, Āhaḍ, Aṭrū, etc., form only a part of the temple decoration during the post-Gupta period. This is found not only in Rajasthan, but all over India. They also disclose the fact that the images of Kṛiṣṇa did not occupy the same place in the temples as the other incarnations of Viṣṇu, viz., Varāha, Vāmana-Trivikrama, Narasimha, etc. Representation of the exploits of Kṛiṣṇa in chronological order in the reliefs at Osia corresponds to the description of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, while it is ignored in the temples at Badāmī (ca. 6th century A.D.),¹¹⁷ Sirpur (Lakṣmaṇa temple, ca. 6th century A.D.),¹¹⁸ Pahārpur (ca. 7th-8th century A.D.)¹¹⁹ and Khajurāho (ca. 10th-12th centuries A.D.).¹²⁰ Like the temples at Badāmī and Pahārpur, in the temples of Osia the life of Kṛiṣṇa is represented from his birth to his youth in a realistic manner in small figures on the long narrative slabs. This shows the continuity of the representation of Kṛiṣṇalīlā scenes in sculpture from the 6th to 9th century A.D. Contrary to this, Khajurāho and other later reliefs of the 11th-12th century A.D., represent Kṛiṣṇa in fair-sized sculptures, as a youth and a divine being with four hands. It can not be denied that from the point of view of continuity in narrative, vividness of expression, dramatic rhythm and originality, the small figures of the temples at Osia appear more realistic than the

fair-sized and profusely ornamented figures of Kṛṣṇalīlā at Khajurāho.

Buddha :—The iconography of the image of Buddha has been referred in the *Bṛihat Saṁhita* and the *Agni Purāṇa*. According to the *Bṛihat Saṁhita* the image of Buddha should reflect the calmness of the soul on its face and the characteristics of *mahāpuruṣa* on the body e.g., the mark of the lotus on the palms and soles of the feet, etc.¹²¹

The assimilation of Buddha among the incarnations of Viṣṇu in the later Gupta period is an example of the tolerance that Hinduism held for the other sects. It is on account of this that Rīṣabha was also considered as an incarnation of Viṣṇu. These were attempts to bring back the followers of Buddhism and Jainism into the fold of Hinduism. The *Agni Purāṇa* refers to the incarnation of Buddha as Māyāmoha.¹²² The assimilation of Buddha has been explained in the *Viṣṇu*¹²³ and the *Agni Purāṇas*. They state that in order to misguide the Asuras from the right path of Vedic sacrifices, Viṣṇu incarnated himself as Māyāmoha, the son of Śuddhodana. Other *Purāṇas* like the *Matsya* and the *Bhāgavata* also include Buddha in the list of incarnations. However, the exact date of the inclusion of Buddha among the incarnations cannot be ascertained from these references. Nor do the inscriptions of the Gupta period refer to this fact. The earliest reference to the image of Buddha is in the *Bṛihat Saṁhita*,¹²⁴ but it does not mention him as an incarnation of Viṣṇu. Varāha Mihira refers to the images of Jina¹²⁵ and Buddha together as the objects of worship for the Jainas and Buddhists respectively, but not as the incarnations of Viṣṇu.

The sculptures also reveal that Buddha was included among the incarnations of Viṣṇu after the Gupta period, but this transformation could not be achieved completely. He is seldom¹²⁶ depicted as the main incarnation like Varāha, Narasimha and Vāmana. The mode of representing him also differs from the other incarnations. He is neither represented like the other incarnations with the usual attributes of Viṣṇu nor with the *vyāha*-images of

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Viṣṇu. On the contrary, he is always depicted in the aspect of *dhyānī Buddha*¹²⁷ either seated in *bhūmi-sparśa* or in the *vyākhyāna mudrā* or standing with *varada* or *abhaya mudrā* wearing a *sanghātī*¹²⁸ and is portrayed with pendulous ears and short hair.¹²⁹

Besides the Daśavatāra slabs,¹³⁰ there are some sculptures where the image of Buddha is carved separate from the other incarnations on the exterior of the temple. In the Harihara temple (No. 1) at Osia, there is a separate niche in which Buddha is shown seated in the aspect of *dhyānī Buddha*. This suggests that the carving of the image of Buddha as an incarnation began in the 8th century A.D., in the temples of Rajasthan. An image of Buddha has also been excavated along with Nrisimha, Viṣṇu and other Brahmanical images from the remains of a Hindu temple (ca. 10th century A.D.) at Parānagar (Alwar) and is preserved with other images in the store of the Nīlakaṇṭha temple there. /

Kalki :—Kalki is the future incarnation of Viṣṇu, hence he is not associated with any legend in *Purāṇas*. This is also reflected in the sculpture. It is only in the Daśavatāra slabs that his image is represented as sitting on horse-back.

III

Other Images of Visnu

Besides the incarnatory images, there are some other images which were also popular in the post-Gupta period.

Sesaśayi Images

The image of Śeṣaśayī is another form of Viṣṇu which was popular in Rajasthan. In this form Viṣṇu is always depicted in a reclining posture on the Śeṣanāga. It is called by various names in literature and iconographical texts. In the *Sāttvata Saṁhita*¹³¹ it is named as Padmanābha, Ekārṇavaśayin, Nyagrodhaśayin and Pātalaśayan. The *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*¹³² and the *Rāpa-maṇḍana*¹³³ describe it as Padmanābha and Jalaśayan respectively.

The literary references to the image of Śeṣaśāyī indicate the popularity of its worship in the Gupta period. In the *Raghuvamśa*¹³⁴ the description of the Ādimūrti of Viṣṇu seated or sleeping on the Śeṣa is in accordance with the images of Viṣṇu reclining on the serpent's body which serves as his bed. Viṣṇu is depicted in this word-picture as resting his foot on the lap of Lakṣmī, wearing a *kaustubha* and *śrīvatsa*; and worshipped by the personified Āyudhas and the vehicle Garuḍa. Again in the same work, while describing the ocean to Sītā, Rāma elaborates the figure of the Supreme Being, who practises *yoganidrā* in the ocean and from whose naval springs the lotus on which Brahmā is seated.¹³⁵ A temple of Śeṣaśāyī has been vividly described in the *Matsya Purāṇa*.¹³⁶ Though no trace of such a temple is found in the Gupta period, it indicates that the Śeṣaśāyī form of Viṣṇu had begun to gain the status of a principal deity.

However, the epigraphs of the 9th and 10th centuries A.D., of the Gurjara - Pratihāra rulers corroborate with the description of the *Matsya Purāṇa* and show the popularity of the worship of Śeṣaśāyī during the post-Gupta period. An inscription of Mahendrapāla (903-907 A.D.) of the Imperial Pratihāra dynasty refers to the building of a triple shrine of Viṣṇu, where the Śeṣaśāyī form was worshipped.¹³⁷ In its invocatory verses, this form of Viṣṇu is also eulogized. Moreover, the Gwalior *Prāśasti* of Bhoja records the erection of a temple in honour of Viṣṇu invoked as Śeṣaśāyī.¹³⁸

The gradual development of the Śeṣaśāyī form of Viṣṇu from the *pārśva devatā* to a higher status of a principal deity is substantiated by sculptural evidences. The terracotta image from the brick temple at Bhītaragāon (Kanpur, U.P., ca. 5th century A.D.)¹³⁹ and the image from the Deogarh temple (Jhansi, ca. 6th century A.D.)¹⁴⁰ are the earliest examples of the Śeṣaśāyī images. These images are simple and not overcrowded with the images of other divinities. In this type only the Nārāyaṇa aspect of Viṣṇu is emphasized. In the temples of the Gupta period, these images were placed as the *pārśva devatā* to the principal deity - Viṣṇu.

In Rajasthan, an image of Śeṣaśāyī was enshrined in the sanctum of a small temple at Baḍolī, Kota (ca. 10th century A.D.). The image corresponds to the description given in the *Matsya Purāṇa* and shows that it was begun to be worshipped as a principal deity in the post-Gupta period. On this ground, it could be safely concluded that an image of Śeṣaśāyī discovered from one of the Vaiṣṇava temples at Osia¹⁴¹ was also an object of worship. As no temple of the post-Gupta period now exists at Bārān (Kota), it can not be ascertained whether the Śeṣaśāyī image discovered there was enshrined in a temple as a principal deity or as a *pārśva devatā* to the principal deity — Viṣṇu.

The *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*,¹⁴² the *Devatāmūrti Prakaraṇa* and the other North Indian texts prescribe a simple image of Śeṣaśāyī while the South Indian texts such as the *Vaikhāṇasāgama* prescribes a complicated and intricate form of the image. The impact of Śeṣaśāyī images of South India is clearly evidenced on those of Rajasthan belonging to the later part of the 9th and 10th centuries A.D. The images from Baḍolī and Bārān follow the description of the Vira Śayanamūrti of the *Vaikhāṇasāgama* — “*Chaturbhujam śankhachakradharam savyahastaśiropadhanam kritvā vāmahastam prasārya śayanam pādapārśve śrībhūmibhyām pādāmadakabhyām madhukaitābhābhyām.... nābhipadme samāśīnam brahmānam..*”¹⁴³ In both the images, the *chakra* is held in the attitude of *prayoga*. The upper panels of these images are crowded with demons and gods like Vāyu, Indra, Śiva, etc., seated on their vehicles. The lower part of the panels is also crowded with divinities, *ṛṣis*, *nāgas*, etc.

While the image from Baḍolī¹⁴⁴ is not overcrowded with these minor iconographic details like the image from Bārān, which belongs to a later period. These details have marred the artistic quality of the sculpture. The image of Śeṣaśāyī preserved in the Udaipur Museum also depicts minor iconographic details. Here, the *nāga* world which is shown rejoicing and playing musical instruments, is suggestive of the primeval ocean. In some images it is also indicated by the representation of pitchers, fish, turtle, *makara* and *ratnapātras*.

Vaikuṇṭha Images :—The images of Vaikuṇṭha is the composite form of the incarnations of Viṣṇu, on which is discernible the influence of the concept of trinity. The faces of Varāha, Puruṣa and the lion are carved in this type of image. An inscription from Khajurāho confirms the worship of the three-faced image of Vaikuṇṭha.¹⁴⁵ Differing from this, the *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* and the *Rupamaṇḍana* state that the images of Vaikuṇṭha should have four faces. In the literary and iconographic texts the fourth face is differently described as that of Kapilānana,¹⁴⁶ or Hayagrīva¹⁴⁷ or of a woman.¹⁴⁸ This face is not represented in sculpture, as the images are carved in relief and not in the round.

In Rajasthan, the images of Vaikuṇṭha are found in quite a large number. Here, Vaikuṇṭha is carved with three faces, seated on Garuḍa or *padmāsana* or in a standing posture. In an image (ca 10th century A.D.) from Chandrabhāga,¹⁴⁹ Vaikuṇṭha is seated on Garuḍa and is shown holding the *Āyudhas* in his eight hands. Although the arrangement of his weapons tallies with the description of the eight-armed image of Viṣṇu of the *Brihat Samhita*¹⁵⁰, there were no traditions of carving composite images of Viṣṇu during the period of *Brihat Samhita* (ca. 5th century A.D.). The archaeological and literary evidences confirm that such images were carved only from the 6th century A.D.¹⁵¹ The image was an outcome of the synthesis of the incarnations of Viṣṇu which was achieved after the period of the *Brihat Samhita*. It is because of this reason that this text does not specify the faces of Viṣṇu, but only describes his three forms—(i) two armed (ii) four-armed and (iii) eight-armed. This compels us to conclude that the description of the *Brihat Samhita*, though similar in the arrangement of the *āyudhas* was not meant for the image of Vaikuṇṭha.

Viśvarūpa of Viṣṇu :—Another form of the images carved under the spell of the synthesizing concept of trinity is the Viśvarūpa of Viṣṇu. The image is carved with three human faces instead of the faces of the incarnations of Viṣṇu. In Rajasthan, a peculiar image of Trimūrti or Viśvarūpa of Viṣṇu was found in Gangobī

(Kota).¹⁵² In this image, three human faces are carved. Among the weapons only the *khadga* and the *khetaka* are visible, as the other arms are completely broken. From the presence of Kalki on horseback and a tortoise in a small niche on one side, it could be ascertained to be the image or Viśvarūpa or *Chaturmūrti* of Viṣṇu.

Yoganārāyaṇa Images :—The carving of the images of Viṣṇu in the *yogamudrā* was also in vogue during this period. The posture of *yoga* has been described by Kālidāsa as the *paryankabandha*,¹⁵³ in which the image is shown seated in *yogāsana*, the natural hands are placed on the lap in *yogamudrā*, the eyes remain half closed and the sight directed and fixed on the tip of the nose.

In the *Vaikhāṇasāgama*, emphasis is laid on the *āyudharahita* image of Viṣṇu in *yogamudrā*. It prescribes that the image of Yoganārāyaṇa seated on a white lotus-seat in the *paryankabandha* should be adorned with jewels and devoid of *mukūṭa*. The Yoganārāyaṇa image should have four hands devoid of *śankha* and *chakra*.¹⁵⁴ Contrary to this, texts like the *Siddhārtha Saṁhitā* prescribes the *āyudhas*, in the hands of Yoganārāyaṇa. In fact, these texts differ on the posture and the position of two of his hands rather than on any other detail.

As a corollary to this, the tradition of carving the images of Yoganārāyaṇa are found in both forms of (i) holding the weapons in the additional hands and (ii) devoid of weapons.

In Rajasthan also, both these types of examples are found. The first type of an image of Yogāsana Viṣṇu (ca. 10th century A.D.) is found in Chandrāvati (Sirohi). Here, Viṣṇu is depicted with *nāsāgradriṣṭi* having four hands; the two natural hands are placed on the lap, while of the two rear hands, one is holding a lotus, and the other is broken. It appears that the broken hand was holding an *akṣamālā*.¹⁵⁵

The examples of the second type of image of Yogīśvara Viṣṇu are found at Osia (Harihara temple, No. 3, ca. 8th century

A.D.), Ābānerī (ca. 9th century A.D.) and Dīdwānā¹⁵⁶ (Marwar, ca. 10th century A.D.). They are similar to each other in details, except that in the latter two places the images are carved on a bigger panel than in the former. In both of them, the Yogīśvara Viṣṇu is without weapons, but is shown holding the *vanamālā* in the rear hands. The *dhyāna* of the *Vaikhānasāgama* refers to an *āyudharahita* image of Yoganārāyaṇa with no other positive directions about the rear hands in the texts. Thus, it was left to the genius of the sculptor to decide the manner of carving the rear hands. In the absence of instructions from the iconographic texts, the sculptor has made them holding a *vanamālā*. These are the remarkable specimens illustrative of the continuity of the tradition of carving this type of image of Yogīśvara Viṣṇu between the 8th and 10th centuries A.D., in Rajasthan.

In view of this, the opinion of R. C. Agrawal¹⁵⁷ that the image of Yogīśvara Viṣṇu from Dīdwānā was carved under the influence of Jaina devotees and other non-Vaiṣṇava followers needs scrutiny. His inference is based on an inscription of Kīrtipāla of V.S. 1218,¹⁵⁸ in which Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śāṅkara are invoked as 'Jina'. This assumption does not seem valid as the inscription belongs to the 12th century A.D., while the image is of ca. 10th century A.D. Secondly, the carving of this type of image was already in vogue in the 8th century A.D., as is evidenced by the image of Yogīśvara Viṣṇu from Osia of this period. Therefore, the contention of R. C. Agrawal that the idea expressed in the inscription of the 12th century A.D., was an operative factor in carving the image of Yogīśvara Viṣṇu of ca. 10th century A.D., seems unconvincing. The discovery of the image of Yogīśvara Viṣṇu of an earlier period from Osia (ca. 8th century A.D.) and Ābānerī (ca. 9th century A.D.) further prove that this type of image was not carved under any other influence but that of Vaiṣṇavism itself.¹⁵⁹

Āyudhapuruṣas of Viṣṇu :—The tradition of representing the weapons of Viṣṇu in the human form of Āyudhapuruṣas was a feature of the Gupta period and it continued in the post-Gupta period. On the pedestal, the accessory figures of Chakrapuruṣa,

Śankhapuruṣa, Gadādevī, etc., were represented up to the height of the thighs of the main deity.¹⁶⁰ Similarly, the Āyudhapuruṣas of Śiva and other divinities also began to be personified in the post-Gupta period. But in the realm of art the concretized form of Śaiva weapons are not as largely represented as the Vaiṣṇava weapons. Among the Śaiva weapons the most important is *triśūla* puruṣa.¹⁶¹

The reference to the personification of the weapons of Viṣṇu is first met with in the dramas of Bhāsa. In the *Devavakyaṃ*¹⁶² and the *Balacharitaṃ*,¹⁶³ dramatization of the weapons of Kṛiṣṇa viz., Sudarśanachakra, Pāñchajanya-śankha, Kaumodakī gadā, Nandaka-sword and Śaranga-bow is introduced for the first time. In these dramas, the weapons are personified and presented on the stage. These were called by Kṛiṣṇa when he showed his Viśvarūpa to Duryodhana and others. Although from the point of view of dramatization the date and editing of the plays of Bhāsa is a matter of controversy, it could be undoubtedly stated that the personification of the weapons took place sometime in the Gupta period.

The personification of the weapons from such an early period is also substantiated by the discovery of the coins of Maues of the Indo-Scythic period.¹⁶⁴ In these coins, *vajra* appears as a man and behind him a double pronged thunderbolt is carved. Here *vajra* is depicted as an Āyudhapuruṣa, of Zeus-Indra, who is also shown as the principal figure on the coin.

From the references in the *Raghuvamśa*,¹⁶⁵ it appears that the tradition of carving the Āyudhapuruṣas was well-established in the times of Kālidāsa. Kālidāsa mentions the personified Āyudhapuruṣas in the dwarfish forms with the mark of their original form on their head or in their hands. He states that the expectant queens of Daśaratha saw in their dreams that they were guarded by the dwarfish figures marked with a lotus, sword, mace, bow and wheel.¹⁶⁶

The form of the Āyudhas was decided according to the gender of the word. *Gadā* was conceived as a lady attendant, while *chakra* as a male. Neuter gender such as *padma* was conceived as a

male attendant because of the convenience in its representation, though the texts have delineated him as a eunuch.¹⁶⁷

In sculpture, these Āyudhas are represented in various ways and their mode of representation sometimes helps in determining the period of the sculpture.¹⁶⁸ In the fourth and fifth centuries of the Christian era these weapons were carved in the dwarfish form as described in the *Raghuvamśa*. They had the mark of their original form on their heads.

In the 9th and 10th centuries A.D., another way of representing the Āyudhapuruṣas was to show them carrying the weapons in their hands. An image of Chakrapuruṣa from Ranganamahā (Bikaner) of the early Gupta period is represented in the dwarfish form with a halo of wheel behind the head.¹⁶⁹

The images of these Āyudhapuruṣas are carved standing in a *tribhanga* pose, holding a weapon in one hand while the other hand is placed in the *Kāṭyavalambita* mudrā.¹⁷⁰ When seated, they are carved in *lalitāsana* below the seat of the god. In the later part of the 10th and 11th centuries A.D., the Āyudhapuruṣas were carved bearing their weapons in their hands as well as on their heads.¹⁷¹ Another mode of depicting the Āyudhapuruṣas was to show the principal deity keeping its hands on their heads. An image depicting *chakra* and *śankha* in this manner, is now preserved at the Sardar Museum, Jodhpur.¹⁷² There is another unique method of representing the weapons of Viṣṇu. Here the god carries his normal weapon with a human head on its top to symbolise the personification. In the temple of Śiva at Baḍoli the Āyudhapuruṣas of Viṣṇu are carved in this manner.¹⁷³

The Vaiṣṇava sculptures of Rajasthan mainly represent Śeṣaśāyī, Vaikunṭha and Viśvarūpa aspects of Viṣṇu and his various incarnations. Among these the sculptures representing Trivikrama, Narasimha, Kriṣṇa and Śeṣaśāyī are of special interest because they confirm the cultural contacts with South India during this period.

References

1. Prof. H. Luders, "The Mora Well Inscription", *EI*, XXIV, pp. 194-200 ; See also, J. N. Banerjea, "The holy Pañchavīras of the Vṛiṣṇis", *JISOA*, X, 1941, pp. 65-68 ; J. N. Banerjea, *Religion in Art and Archaeology*, 1st edn., University of Lucknow, 1968, pp. 2-3 and 12-13 ; See also, Sudhakar Chattopadhyaya, *The Evolution of Theistic Sects in Ancient India*, 1st edn., Progressive Publishers, Calcutta, 1962, p. 24-42.
2. D. C. Sircar, "Besanagar Garuḍa Pillar Inscription of the time of Bhāgabhadra", *Select Inscriptions*, Vol. I, University of Calcutta, 2nd edn., 1965, pp. 88-89.
3. The epigraphs of the Gupta period describe the rulers as *Parama Bhāgavata*. These rulers were specially the worshippers of Viṣṇu, Nārāyaṇa and Varāha incarnations. Cf. Banerjea, *Religion in Art and Archaeology*, p. 5.
4. "Viṣṇorbhāgavatān....". Cf. Vārāha Mihira, *Bṛihat Saṁhitā*, Ed., Baladeva Prasada Misra, Venkateśvara Press, Bombay, Samvat 2012, ch. 60, vs. 19.
5. *VSMRS*, p. 2.
6. D. C. Sircar, "Besanagar Garuḍa Pillar Inscription of the time of Bhāgabhadra", *op. cit.*, pp. 88-89.
7. D. R. Bhandarkar, "Hāthī Baḍā Brāhmī Inscription at Nagari", *EI*, XXII, pp. 198-205.
8. H. Luders, "The Mora Well Inscription", *EI*, XXIV, pp. 194-200.
9. D. C. Sircar, "Besanagar Garuḍa Pillar Inscription of the time of Bhāgabhadra", *op. cit.*, pp. 88-89.
10. "Bhagavadbhyām Saṁkarṣaṇa Vāsudevābhyām.... anihatābhyām sarveśvarābhyām Pājāśilāprākaro Nārāyaṇa Vāṭikā". Cf. D. R. Bhandarkar, "Hāthī Baḍā Brāhmī Inscription at Nagari", *EI*, XXII, p. 204.
11. V. S. Agrawala, "Prāchīna Mādhyamika kī Nārāyaṇa Vāṭika", *Poddar Abhinandana Grantha* (Hindi), pp. 901-902 ; See also, Banerjea, *Religion in Art and Archaeology*, pp. 9-10.
12. J. N. Banerjea, "The Holy Pañchavīras of the Vṛiṣṇis", *op. cit.*, pp. 65-66.
13. Banerjea, *Religion in Art and Archaeology*, pp. 10-12.
14. J. N. Banerjea, "Pauranic and Tantric Religion", University of Calcutta, 1966, p. 28.
15. Patañjali, *Vyākaraṇa Mahābhāṣya*, Motilal Banarasidass, Delhi, 1967, IV, 3, 95, 98 ; See also, J. N. Banerjea, *Pauranic and Tantric Religion*, pp. 20-22.
16. *MBH*, I, ch. 197, vs. 33 ; *MBH*, I, ch. 228, vs. 20 ; See also, *ETSAI*, pp. 29-30.
17. *VSMRS*, pp. 35-38.
18. *MBH*, Vanaparva, ch. 12, vs. 25-26.

19. V. S. Agrawala, "Prāchīna Mādhyamikā ki Nārāyaṇa Vāṭikā", *op. cit.*, pp. 901-902 ; See also, Banerjea, *Religion in Art and Archaeology*, pp. 9-10 ; D. R. Bhandarkar, "Hāthī Bādā Brahmi Inscription at Nagari", *op. cit.*, pp. 203-204.
20. D. R. Bhandarkar, "Hāthī Bādā Brāhmī Inscription of Nagari", *op. cit.*, pp. 203-204 ; See also, A. C. Carleyle, *Report of a Tour in Eastern Rajputana*, A. S. I., Vol. VI, pp. 196-198 ; D. R. Bhandarkar, *PRASWC*, 1916, p. 56 ; Stella Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, II, University of Calcutta, 1946 p. 348.
21. J. N. Banerjea, *Religion in Art and Archaeology*, pp. 10-12.
22. These twenty-four forms of Viṣṇu are - Vāsudeva, Keśava, Nārāyaṇa, Mādhava, Puruṣottama, Adhokṣaja, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Govinda, Viṣṇu, Madhu-sūdana, Achyuta, Upendra, Pradyumna, Trivikrama, Narasimha, Janārdana, Vāmana, Śrīdhara, Aniruddha, Hṛīṣīkeśa, Padmanābha, Dāmodara, Hari and Kṛiṣṇa. cf. Sūtradhāra Maṇḍana, *Rūpamaṇḍana*, Ch. III, vs. 9-20.
23. The description of the *Vyāhavaḍa* is found in some of the *Pañcharātra Samhitās*, which were composed in the Gupta period, Cf. Banerjea, *Religion in Art and Archaeology*, p. 16.
24. *Bṛihat Samhitā*, ch. LVIII, vs. 30-35.
25. *Ibid.*, ch LVIII, vs. 36-40
26. Hemādri, *Chaturvarga Chintāmaṇi*, Vrata Khaṇḍa, ch. I, pp. 114-115.
27. Maṇḍana, *Devatāmūrti Prakarāṇa*, ch. 5, vs. 6-13.
28. *Rūpamaṇḍana*, ch. 3, vs. 9-21.
29. *Agni Purāṇa*, ch. 48.
30. Image of Adhokṣaja, Kota Museum, Ex. No. 257 ; Image of Padmanābha, Kota Museum, Ex. No. 258 ; Image of Puruṣottama, Kota Museum, Ex. No. 268.
31. Fragment of a Doorjamb from a Vaiṣṇava temple at Bagherā, Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, Ex. No. 362 ; See Pl. XVI.
32. See, Pl. XIX.
33. *DHI*, pp. 388-393.
34. See, Pl. XXXVIII.
35. R. Awasthi, *Khajurāho ki Deva Pratimāyen*, Oriental Publishing House, Agra, 1967, fig. 26. See also, Image of *Matsya* at the Gwalior Museum ; See also, S. M. Gupta, *Viṣṇu and his Incarnations*, Somaiya Publications, Bombay, 1974, pp. 13-14.
36. N. K. Bhattasali, *Iconography of the Buddhist and Brahmanical Sculptures in the Dacca Museum*, Dacca, 1929, pl. XXXIX.
37. Awasthi, *op. cit.*, fig. 23.
38. Āhaḍ Museum, Udaipur, Ex. No. 125/2 ; See Pl. III.

39. Āhaḍ Museum, Udaipur, Ex. No. 125/1.
40. R.R. Haldar, "Inscription of the time of Allāṣa of Mewar, V. S. 1010", *Indian Antiquary*, LVIII, 1929, Bombay, pp. 161-162; R. C. Agrawal, "Āhaḍ kī Prāchīna Mūrtikalā", (Hindi), *Śodha Patrikā*, XIV, (1), 1963, p. 49.
41. *EHI*, Vol. I, pt. I, pp. 127-128.
42. See, Pl. XV.
43. A.K. Bhattacharya, "The theme of the Churning of the Ocean in Indian Art and Khmer Art", *Arts Asiatiques*, Paris, VI, (2), 1959, pp. 121-134 and pls.
44. J. Gonda, *Aspects of Early Visnuism*, Motilal Banarasidass, 1969, pp. 129-137.
45. *Atharva Veda*, XII, 1, 48.
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58. *Agni Purāṇa*, ch. 49, vs. 18.
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65. *MBH*, Āraṇyaka Parva, ch. 100, vs. 20 ; *MBH*, Śānti Parva, ch 339, vs. 78.
66. *Harivaṃśa Purāṇa*, ch. 19, vs. 77.
67. *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, III, ch. 78/2, vs. 1-6.
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75. *EHI*, Vol. I, pt. I, pl. XLV.
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77. Bhāsa, *Karṇabhāram*, I, vs. 1.
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82. *Vaikhānaśāgama*, Quoted from *EHI*, Vol. I, pt. II, Appendix, p. 36.
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92. Bhāsa, *Madhyama Vyāyoga*, I, vs. 1.
93. Daṇḍī, *Daśakumāracharitam*, ed. by T. Bhattacharya, Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, Varanasi, 1948, p. 1, vs. 1-4.
94. *Agni Purāṇa*, ch. 236, vs. 15.
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97. R. C. Agrawal, "Rāmāyaṇa Scenes in Rajasthan Sculptures". *IHQ*, XXX, No. 2, pp. 156-157.
98. R. C. Majumdar, "Jodhpur Inscription of Pratihāra Bāuka : V. S. 894", *EI*, XVIII, vs. 4, p. 95.
99. The Jatipara Image of Kṛiṣṇa is now preserved at the Lucknow Museum. Cf. *ARASI*, 1921-22, p. 104.
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109. D. R. Bhandarkar, "Two Sculptures at Maṇḍor", *ASIAR*, 1905-06, pp. 135-140.
110. R. C. Agrawal, "Kṛiṣṇa and Balarāma in Rajasthan Sculptures and Epigraphs", *IHO*, XXX, (4), pp. 343-344, 346.
111. Image of 'Keśi' Niṣūdana, from Ābānerī, Āmber Museum, Ex. No. Ab/175-176.
112. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, X, Pūrva Bhāga, Ch. 6, vs. 2-11 and 18 ; ch. 7. vs. 7.
113. The exploits of Kṛiṣṇa such as Yamalārjuna Uddhāra and Vatsāsura vadha are described as "*Kaumāra chāpalam*", and *ulūkhalavikarṣantaṁ Bālakaṁ*. Cf. *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, X, ch. 8, vs. 28 ; ch. 11, vs. 2-11, 19, 58.

114. See Pl. XXIII.
115. See Pl. XXV.
116. See, Pl. XXVII.
117. R. D. Banerjee, *Bas-Reliefs of Badami*, M.A.S.I., No. 25, 1928, Calcutta, pl. XII, figs. b-d, pls. XXIII-XXV.
118. Longhurst, "Ancient Brick Temples in the Central India", *ASIAR*, 1909-10, p. 11, pl. II.
119. K. N. Dikshit, *Excavations at Paharpur*, M.A.S.I. No. 55, 1938, pls. XXVIII, XXIX.
120. Krishna Deva, "Kriṣṇa-Līlā scenes from Khajurāho", *Lalit Kala*, No. 7, Pls. XXXI, XXXII; See also, Awasthy, *op. cit.*, Figs. 39-40.
121. *Bṛihat Samhitā*, LVII, vs. 44
122. *Agni Purāṇa*, ch. XVI, vs. 1-4.
123. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, III, ch. 17-18.
124. *Bṛihat Samhitā*, ch. LVII, vs. 44.
125. *Ibid*, vs. 45.
126. *DHI*, p. 424.
127. Hemādri, *Chaturvarga Chintāmaṇi-Vrata Khaṇḍa*, Vol. II, pt. I, ch. I, p. 119.
128. *Rupamaṇḍana*, III, vs. 27-28.
129. *Agni Purāṇa*, XLIX, vs. 8 ; *Bṛihat Samhitā*, LVII, vs. 44.
130. The earliest Daśavatāra slab (ca. 7th century A. D.) hails from a temple at Āmṇvāṛh (Kota). Cf. P. Jayakara, "Temples at Āmṇvāṛh", *Marg*, XII, March 1959, p. 58.
131. The list of 39 incarnations is given in Chapter IX of the *Sāttvata Samhitā*. Cf. F. O. Sachrader, *Introduction to the Pañcarātra and the Ahir-Budhnya Samhitas*, Adyar, Madras, 1916, pp. 42-43.
132. *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, III, ch. 81.
133. *Rūpamaṇḍana*, III, vs. 29-30 ; See also, *Devatāmūrti Prakaraṇa*, ch. V, vs. 86-90.
134. Kālidāsa, *Raghuvamśa*, X, vs. 7, 8, 10-12.
135. *Ibid.*, XIII, vs. 6.
136. *Matsya Purāṇa*, ch. 119, vs. 28-36 ; V. S. Agrawala, *Matsya Purāṇa, A Study*, p. 200.
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138. R.C. Majumdar, "Gwalior Praśasti of the Gurjara-Pratihāra king Bhoja", *EI*, XVIII, 1925-26, p. 107, vs. 1.
139. M. S. Vats, "The temple of Bhītaragāon", *ASIAR*, 1908-09, pp. 5-21.

140. Kalpana Desai, *Iconography of Viṣṇu*, 1st Edn., Abhinava Publications, New Delhi, 1973, fig. 21.
141. Bhandarkar, "Temples of Osia", *ASIAR*, 1908-09, p. 109.
142. *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, III, ch. 81.
143. *EHI*, Vol. I, pt. II, Appendix, p. 25.
144. See Pl. XXVIII.
145. Kielhorn, "Inscription from Khajurāho", *EI*, I, pp. 122-125, "...kiri puruṣasim-hobhayajuṣam.....kapilādīnavatu vaḥ sa Vaikuṇṭhaḥ".
146. *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, III, ch. 44, vs. 11-12.
147. *DHI*, p. 401 ; See also, R. Awasthi, op. cit., p. 136.
148. *Rāpamaṇḍana*, III, vs. 52-54.
149. See, Pl. XXIV.
150. *Bṛihat Saṃhitā*, LVII, vs. 30-35.
151. Kalpana Desai. op. cit., p. 41, fig. 32.
152. The image is now preserved at the Kota Museum.
153. Kālidāsa, *Kumārasambhavaṃ*, III, vs. 47.
154. "Śankhachakrarahita parabhujaḥ...." cf. *EHI*, Vol. I, pt. II, Appendix, p. 20.
155. Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, Ex. No. 30 ; See Pl. XXVI.
156. The image of Yogīśvara Viṣṇu from Dīdwanā is now preserved at the Sardar Museum, Jodhpur; See pl. XXIX.
157. R. C. Agrawal, "A Unique Image of Yoganārāyaṇa in the Jodhpur Museum", *IHQ*, XXX, pp. 388-389.
158. F. Kielhorn, "Nāḍol Plates of Rājputra Kīrtipāla, V.S. 1218", *EI*, IX, p. 67.
159. See, Pl. XXX.
160. "Urumātrachchritāyāme...." Cf. Gopāl Bhaṭṭa, *Haribhakti Vilas*, Quoted from Banerjea, "Viṣṇu" *JISOA*, XIII, p. 75.
161. V. R. Mani, *The cult of weapons, The Āyudhapuruṣas*, Agam Kalā Prakāśhan, New Delhi, 1985, p. 29.
162. Bhāsa, *Dātavākyaṃ*, I, p. 33 ff. vs. 42-50.
163. Bhāsa, *Bālacharitaṃ* I, pp. 23-25, vs. 21-24 ; *Ibid.*, II, p. 48, vs. 22.
164. *DHI*, p. 537.
165. "Hetibhiḥ chetanāvadbhīḥ", Cf. Kālidāsa, *Raghuvamśa*, X, vs. 12-13. About the Āyudhapuruṣas Mallinatha comments "jayaśabdaṃ udghoṣayantiḥ mūṛi-matibhirastradevatābhīḥ".
166. Kālidāsa, *Raghuvamśa*, X, vs. 60.
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168. Sivaramamurti, "The Weapons of Viṣṇu", *Artibus Asiae*, XVIII, 1955, p. 128.
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170. See, Images in Rajputana Museum, Ex. Nos. I (8), 596 ; Government Central Museum, Jaipur ; 'Sthānaka Viṣṇu, 10th century A.D.
171. Image of Viṣṇu, Āmber Museum, Ex. No. 212/16 ; Image of Viṣṇu from Bhusawar is now preserved at the Bharatpur Museum.
172. See, Pl. XXXI.
173. V. R. Mani, *op. cit*, p. 10, fig. 7.





4

Saiva Themes

After Viṣṇu Śiva is the next important deity in the Brahmanical triad. Like the other parts of Northern India, in Rajasthan also, the temples dedicated to Śiva are comparatively fewer than those of Viṣṇu. This was due to the lesser patronage to Śaivism from the upper classes of society.¹

The worship of Śiva in India was prevalent since the earliest period in two forms i.e., (i) the *linga* form and (ii) the human form. Its origin could be traced from the proto-historic cultures of the Indus Valley, where the phallic emblems and a deity in human form were worshipped.² This deity is depicted on the seals having three faces, seated in the yogic posture and surrounded by animals like the deer, tiger, etc. This can be cited as an example of the depiction of Śiva in human form. These characteristics of the proto-Śiva resemble the Rudra of the Vedic literature, which had finally evolved into the concept of Paurāṇic Śiva³ who was also worshipped both in the phallic and human forms. From the evidences given by Pāṇini and Patañjali⁴ and the Greek writers⁵ it is quite probable that the followers of the Śaiva sect did exist in the pre-Christian period. The archaeological finds of the phallic emblems from the Indus Valley⁶ and the references in the *Rigveda* condemning the worshippers of the Śiśna as their deity,⁷ substantiate the possibility that the earliest form of worship of Śiva was the phallic emblem, which was later on taken into the fold of the *Upaniṣadic* Rudra or Iśāna as the symbol of the Rudra-Śiva.⁸ In the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*,⁹ the male principle of creation denoted as Iśāna is associated with the *arghya* signifying the female principle.

I

Representation in Symbolic Form

During the Indus Valley civilization the worship of Śiva in the form of a phallic emblem was the earliest and the most popular one, though He was, then, also conceived in the human form. In the *Rigveda* the worship of Śiva in the symbolic form is referred to, although it was disapproved as a symbol of worship due to its realistic representation.¹⁰ The process of development of representing the Śaiva themes from the stage of a phallic emblem to human

form was completed by the Gupta period, a noteworthy aspect being that none of the symbols of His worship were completely dropped in the process. However, the *linga* form continues to be enshrined in a modified form in the sanctum of the temples of Śiva even today. This historical development could be divided into three stages.

(i) **Phallic worship – First stage of Saiva themes**

The association of phallic worship with Śaivism is confirmed by literary evidence. In the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, which was composed in the 4th–3rd century B.C., Īśāna-Śiva is referred to as presiding over every *yoni* – “*Yo yonimadhitiṣṭhati. . . tamīśanam.*”¹¹ It is from this verse that R.G. Bhandarkar has traced the allusion to the emblem of *linga* and *arghya* as the form of worship in the later period.¹² This is not true historically because the association of male and female principles in the form of symbols of worship was a very late development,¹³ though the concept in the abstract form was in existence from the very early period.

In the *Mahābhārata* the worship of Śiva in the phallic form is also mentioned. In *Anuśāsanaparva*, Upamanyu refers to the worship of Śiva in this form.¹⁴ Megasthenes has identified Śiva with Dionysios, a Greek god,¹⁵ who was also associated with the phallic emblem,¹⁶ vegetation rites and snakes. In the times of Megasthenes (ca. 324–290 B.C.) the Paurāṇic Śiva was worshipped in the form of the phallic emblem, which led him to compare Śiva with Dionysios. The association of Śiva with the bull, staff, three heads and the *linga* is also depicted on the coins found from Taxila and Ujjain.¹⁷

(ii) **Second Stage in the Representation of Saiva themes**

(i) *Mukhalingas* :—Between the 4th and 8th centuries A.D., the phallic emblem of Śiva was marked by his images on all the four sides. The device of the *mukhalinga* is a mode of representing the symbol and the image of Śiva in one form. This was the second stage in the development of the Śaiva themes in sculpture. One of the purposes of carving the image on the symbolic form was to enrich its beauty. The *Matsya Purāṇa* mentions that the

faces should be carved on the Śiva-*linga* so as to make it look more elegant. The more beautiful the sculptured emblem, the more prosperity it brings to the worshippers and carvers.¹⁸ At times on the front side of the *linga* was carved only one face or the whole figure of the deity,¹⁹ or either of these figures was carved on all its four sides.²⁰ These emblems were called *mukhalingas*.

The beginning of the tradition of worshipping the *mukha-lingas* could be traced to the *mukhalinga* of Bhīṭā²¹ and that of Guḍimallam²² of the 1st century B.C. The inscription on the Bhīṭā Śiva-*linga*²³ and the Mathura pillar²⁴ (G.E. 61 = 380 A.D.) shed light on the following tradition. The memory of the departed teachers and the religious merit of the followers of the Śaiva sect was commemorated by erecting Śiva-*lingas* comprising their portraits. These portraits were not only confined to the achievement of their facial likeness but they also represented the achievement of their soul in becoming one with Śiva. It is because of this reason that all the faces of the *mukhalinga* carry a similar expression of serenity and quietude.

The figure of Śiva on the earlier phallic emblems is generally analogous with the figure of a *yakṣa*. T.A. Gopinath Rao has pointed out the similarity between the figure of Śiva on the *linga* from Guḍimallam (ca. 1st century B.C.) and a figure of *Yakṣa* from Sāncī.²⁵ Coomaraswamy has also given an illustration of a *linga* having a figure of Śiva (ca. 3rd century A.D.) with four arms²⁶ and delineated as a *Yakṣa*.²⁷ This tradition of depicting the image of Śiva resembling a *Yakṣa* continued even in the post-Gupta Śiva-*lingas* found in Rajasthan. At Gāmaḍī²⁸ (Bharatpur) there is a *linga* bearing two figures of pot-bellied *Yakṣas* (ca. 1st century A.D.) carved on two sides of the *linga*. This is an example of the *dvimukha-linga*, which is a rare type representing Śiva with the symbol.

(ii) *Pañchamukha-linga*:—The worship of the *pañchamukha* form of Śiva is also referred to in the literature. Bāṇa has mentioned it as the *pañchabrahma* form of Siva. In the *Harṣacharita*, Sarasvatī makes a Śiva-*linga* of sand and considering this to be the *pañchabrahma* form of Śiva, makes an offering of eight flowers to the

image : *Pulinapriṣṭhapraṭiṣṭhita saikataśivalingā cha bhaktyā paramayā pañchabrahmapurassarām aṣṭapūṣpikāmadat.*²⁹

The *Rūpamaṇḍana* suggests that the number of faces carved on a *pañchamukha-linga* are sometimes decided by the number of doors of the sanctum. It prescribes that one, three or four faces should be carved on the *linga* : *Mukhalingam trivaktram vā ekavaktram chaturmukham, Sammukham chaikavaktram syāt trivaktre priṣṭhato nahi.*³⁰ A sanctum having only one entrance should have an *ekamukha-linga* facing the front and a temple enshrining a *trimukha linga* should have three doors.

The images of Śiva on the emblem also denote other aspects of His nature. These are Sadyojāta, Vāmadeva, Aghora, Tatpuruṣa and Īśāna representing the five gross elements of matter. The *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* elaborates on these five forms with the help of a different set of names and symbols. The names in the other set corresponding to Sadyojāta, Vāmadeva, Aghora, Tatpuruṣa and Īśāna are Mahādeva, Umā, Bhairava, Nandivaktra and Sadāśiva respectively.³¹ These are represented on the *linga* by five faces or figures; four of them are carved on the four sides of the *linga* and the fifth one above the four faces representing Īśāna : *Īśānam cha tathākāśamūrdhvastham Pañchamam mukham.*³² The carving of the fifth face of Īśāna-Sadāśiva representing *ākāśa* is an exception, as a rule it is not carved³³ because to comprehend it is even beyond the ken of the *yogīs* : *pañchamamcha tattheśānam yogināmapyagocharam.*³⁴ This also corroborates the description given in the iconographic texts. The *Rūpamaṇḍana* also emphasizes that the *pañchamukha-lingas* should have only four faces in the four directions.

Since the faces of Śiva carved on the emblem convey different aspects, their physiognomy also indicates their particular nature. It is represented in the sculpture by certain attributes in the hands by different *jaṭāmukutaś*, ornaments, and expressions on their faces.³⁵ For instance, *Sarpa-kunḍala*, *sarpa* and *kapāla* in *jaṭāmukuta* convey the terrific aspect, while jewels in *jaṭāmukuta*, lotus and crescent moon indicate the serene aspects.

In Rajasthan, a four faced beautiful Śiva-*linga* comes from the temple at Kansua (Kota). The date of this temple has been ascertained by an inscription of the 8th century A.D.,³⁶ which was installed there at the time of the construction of the temple. Though the sculpture is diminutive in height (1½ feet), it is undoubtedly one of the most magnificent example of *Chaturmukha-linga*. Here the face of Aghora is shown with a gaping mouth and showing tusks, while the face of the Vāmadeva is beautiful and the faces of Tatpuruṣa and Sadyojāta are serene and peaceful.

Parimala Padmagupta³⁷ even mentions a Śiva-*linga* of *sphaṭika* bearing the figure of Ardhanārīśvara Śiva, which clearly indicates the prevalence of this type of emblem in the 10th century A.D., though its sculptural counterpart has not yet been found in Rajasthan.

Sometimes in place of four faces other symbols, which were associated with Śiva were also carved on the four sides of the emblem. A Śiva-*linga* from Chaumā (Baṇḍapurā, Rajasthan) bears an image of Śiva resembling a *yakṣa*, a water vessel with a long neck, a female head and a lion. The female head and the lion represent the presence of Pārvatī with her vehicle. The association of such attributes with Śiva is also found in two sculptures of the Kuṣāṇa period³⁸ in Mathura, a place on the border of Rajasthan. The sculptures depict Śiva with a lion, a water vessel and *Yakṣas*.

(iii) Representation in human forms with symbols

The third stage in the evolution of representing the Śaiva themes was the carving of the images in human form, conveying all the aspects of the nature of Śiva through *karaṇas* and symbols held in the hands. This stage of representation could be further elaborated into two aspects: (i) Maheśamūrti and (ii) Lingodbhavamūrti.

{ i } *Maheśamūrti aspect* :—One of the ways of elaborating the idea of presenting the symbol and the concrete image of Śiva in one form was the Trimūrti or Maheśamūrti. In such images the *linga* is not very conspicuous, as the faces are carved on its top and

in high relief instead of in the round. Therefore, the fourth face was left out. The *jaṭāmukuta* carved on the central head suggests the rounded top of the emblem, and the *jaṭāmukutas* of the other two heads were carved in descent to suggest the cylindrical form of the emblem. The reason for carving only the three faces on the emblem may be ascribed to its being generally carved at the back wall of the sanctum in high relief.³⁹ The carving in this way is also in accordance with the *dhyāna* of the *Rupamaṇḍana* which prescribes that the *trimukha-linga* should not have a face at the back.⁴⁰ The well-known Maheśamūrti⁴¹ from the Elephanta Island is a part of the back wall of the shrine. This very well indicates another type of a *trimukha-linga* in sculpture.

The earlier scholars have wrongly considered this type of sculpture as Trimūrti - a composite form of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva — on the basis of the placid faces of Viṣṇu and Brahmā, and the terrific face of Rudra.⁴² However, Rao has rightly identified it as Maheśamūrti.⁴³ This identification is proved correct by the fact that neither any *dhyāna mantra*, nor any literary reference to such a composite form is found. Although the composite forms of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Sūrya and Śiva on a *linga* were in vogue in this period, the manner of their representation was different from Maheśamūrti. In the composite forms of divinities the identifying characteristics of every deity were clearly marked.⁴⁴ In case of such *lingas* each of its four sides bears the image of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Sūrya and Śiva, surmounted by the four heads of *Pañchamukha-linga* with a cylindrical top.⁴⁵

The sculptural examples of Maheśamūrti from Rajasthan also support the view that it was a full manifestation of the supreme Śiva. Contemporaneous with Maheśamūrti of Elephanta is Maheśamūrti in the Śaiva temple at Baḍoli (Kota) which also substantiates the above thesis.⁴⁶ Here Brahmā and Viṣṇu are also carved in a posture of reverence on the upper corners of Maheśamūrti. The central face of this image is badly damaged, but on the basis of the gaping mouth of the right face with a snake in the hand; and the woman like beautiful coiffure⁴⁷ of jewels of the left face, it could be said that the central face was of Tatpuruṣa and the right and left faces are of Aghora-Bhairava and Vāmadeva-Umā respectively. Another example

of this type of sculpture could be cited from Chittorgarh (probably of the 14th-15th century A.D.).⁴⁸ It is not as old as the image of Maheśamūrti at Bādoli, but it clearly helps in showing that the three aspects of Śiva⁴⁹ are represented in one image and also ascertaining the continuity of its carving in the post-Gupta period.

(ii) *Lingodbhavamūrti* :—Another mode of representing the symbol and the image in one form, is described in the iconographic texts as the Lingodbhavamūrti.⁵⁰ Except the *Purāṇas* none of the texts from Northern India refer to this form of Śiva. These images are very common in South India and only a few of its examples are found in Northern India. In Rajasthan, the solitary example of such an image⁵¹ has been found in Harṣanātha (Sikar), where a temple of Śiva was built by Śaiva devotees in the reign of Vigraha Rāja II (956-973 A.D.).⁵² Sometimes the whole of the Lingodbhava theme is represented in sculpture, wherein first Brahmā alone or along with the swan is shown going up to measure the *linga* which is in the form of a blazing column and Viṣṇu is shown burrowing the earth in the human or animal form of Varāha. Below this again both Brahmā and Viṣṇu are shown standing on either side of the column paying respect to the god.

The representation of this theme in the sculpture from Harṣanātha (Sikar) is in accordance with the Paurāṇic narrative.⁵³ This sculpture represents the initial part of the story wherein the column has emerged between the contestants and they are shown wonder-struck at the sudden appearance of the column. Brahmā is also shown flying up and Viṣṇu diving down in human form. The sculptures from Ellora,⁵⁴ Panugal⁵⁵ and Ambarmangalam⁵⁶ depict only the later part of the theme wherein Śiva himself emerges from the blazing column to appraise the efforts of Brahmā and Viṣṇu for measuring the column.

Another sculpture, belonging to the 9th-10th century A.D., has been discovered in Etah (U.P.)⁵⁷ wherein only the initial part of the narrative is represented. It shows the blazing column with Brahmā and Viṣṇu seated on a lotus and paying obeisance to the

column. Here also the figure of Śiva is absent.⁵⁸ An interesting feature of the sculpture from Harṣanātha is the depiction of Viṣṇu in a diving posture in human form and blowing a conch-shell which suggests the beginning of the expedition. Unlike the other sculptures referred to above, in this sculpture, the figures of Brahmā and Viṣṇu are not represented in *añjali mudrā* of reverence but their *mudrās* and facial expressions show surprise at the appearance of such a column. At the top of the column, the presence of the accessory figures of eight *hamsas* and the flying *gandharvas* indicate the heavenly region represented by the *hamsas* who in the epics and *Harivaṃśa Purāṇa*⁵⁹ are called divine beings, the scions of Kāśyapa and the brothers of the gods.⁶⁰

The solitary example of the Lingodbhavamūrti from Rajasthan and its rare references in the iconographic texts of Northern India leads one to the conclusion that this type of image carved at Sikar in Rajasthan was a result of the cultural contacts with South India where this theme was very popular both in literature and sculpture.

II

Iconic Representation of Śiva

The iconic representation of various forms of Śiva could be placed in another major group of the sculptural representation of Śaiva themes. These themes are important from the point of view of the representation of plastic form, although they were given a secondary place in the temples. Such sculptures are placed in the exterior niches and the subsidiary shrines of the main temple while the main sanctum is always enshrined with the aniconic form of Śiva i.e., a Śiva-linga or a *mukha-linga*.⁶¹ These images could be classified into two heads : (1) the images expressing *saumya* or the pacific aspect of Śiva's nature, and (2) the images representing the *ugra* or terrific aspect.⁶² Each of these categories could be further divided into two sections : (i) Images based on some mythological story and (ii) the images without any myth.⁶³ However, all these varieties of Śaiva sculptures were not popular in Northern

India. This was the case in Rajasthan too as can be gleaned from the scanty references in literature and rare examples in the sculptures of this region.

(I) Pacific Aspect of Śiva's Nature

(i) Among the pacific forms of Śiva based on the mythological stories, Rāvaṇānugraha is, of course, represented in the sculptures of Rajasthan. (ii) Among His pacific forms, which are not associated with any myth, the most often represented in the sculptures in Rajasthan are Umā-Māheśvara and Kalyāṇasundara.

The iconographic texts of Northern India also do not mention any other pacific forms of Śiva. The *Rūpamaṇḍana* gives only the *dhyāna* of the Umā-Māheśvara image.⁶⁴ Similarly, the *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* describes only Mahādeva,⁶⁵ Gaurīśvara,⁶⁶ Umā-Māheśvara,⁶⁷ and Bhairava-mahākālarūpa⁶⁸ among the human forms of Śiva.

Among the terrific forms, Tripurāntaka, Gajāsuraavadha and Bhairavamūrti were mostly represented in sculpture.

The above observation is also supported by the contemporary literary evidences reflecting the prevailing traditions. Parimala Padmagupta, a contemporary of Paramāra king Bhoja⁶⁹ (ca. first half of the 11th century A.D.),⁷⁰ enumerates the prevalent pacific and terrific aspects of Śiva in the *Hāṭakeśvara Stuti* of the *Navasāhasāṅkacharita*. He mentions the iconographic features of the image of Śiva as having three eyes and a crescent moon and the figure of Gangā in the *jatās : Antarajaṭāpihita somasurāpagāya, prachchhannapañchaśara-śāsanalochanāya, tīvrataglapita śailasutāsvarūpa, Vigyānanarmapaṭave baṭave namaste*.⁷¹ Other popular pacific forms mentioned here are of Ardhanārīśvara as *Dehārdhavarṭigirijā*, Brahmachārī Śiva, and the Aṣṭamūrti⁷² of Śiva. The doctrine of Aṣṭamūrti, which had also developed in this period was very often mentioned in literature and epigraphs, but it rarely found any expression in sculpture. In the *Mālavikāgnimitram*⁷³ and the *Kumārasambhavam*,⁷⁴ Kālidāsa refers to the eight forms of Śiva which uphold this universe. In the *Abhijñāna Śakuntalam*,⁷⁵

he explicitly enumerates these eight forms. Among these forms the Gangā has been mentioned as *jalamayamūrti* of Śiva — “*Śambhorambumayī mūrtissaiva devī surāpaga*.”⁷⁶ These forms of Śiva are all-pervading as is emphasized in the Bheraghat inscription (1155 A.D.) and still they are conceived as located in the physical form of Śiva : *Bhataṁ sadvibhuyadvibhāti bhuvanaṁ yad vibhramād, yajjagannetrānandakaram dharāśrayarasād yanyatvahetuścha, yat yad gandhoddhāradhāma yachchhayajate śītaṁ yad, ekāntatassasparśaṁ yad arūpaṁ ebhiravatād yuṣmān śarīraiḥ śivaiḥ*.⁷⁷ The all-pervasive sky is held in His ear ; the Sun that gives light, the moon that gives pleasure and the fire which are His three eyes ; the air that is only felt is His breath ; water that causes taste is held on His head, and the earth is His body : “*Sūryachandramasau samaṁ hutabhuja yasyatrayī chakṣuṣāṁ, Uchchavāseṣu marut tanau vasumatī yasyottamaṅge payah, Vyomaśrotracharam chirāya paramānandātmarūpaṁ svayaṁ...soṣṭamūrtiḥ śivam*”.⁷⁸ Hence, the Aṣṭamūrti is only represented in sculpture in the physical form of Śiva and not by eight faces or any other sort of composite form.⁷⁹

The references to other popular forms of Ardhanārīśvara⁸⁰ and Gajāsuraavadha,⁸¹ which were prevalent in Northern India, are also found in literature.

(i) *Rāvaṇānugrahamūrti* :—The Rāvaṇānugraha is among the pacific themes based on the Paurāṇic narratives, which tell us that Śiva had conferred grace on the demon Rāvaṇa, who out of pride of his power uplifted the Mount Kailāśa. This narrative captured the imagination of the artists and poets of this period to such an extent that every work of theirs on Śiva invariably mentioned it. The sculptures depicting this theme are known as Rāvaṇānugrahamūrti.

The popularity of the theme and its composition have been reflected in this word-picture : *Kailāśasya daśamukhabhujochchhavāsita prasthasandheḥ*.⁸² Āchārya Parimala uses it as a simile for the mount Arbuba surrounded by trees from below and white clouds from above which he writes resemble mount Kailāśa uplifted

by Rāvaṇa's forest of arms : *Pāṇḍuḥ śaradghanairūrdhvamadhas-talivanāsitaḥ, yaḥ Kailāsa ivāśliṣṭaḥ paulastyabhujasampadā*.⁸³ In the same strain, Māgha writes that when Rāvaṇa lifted Kailāsa, Pārvatī who was sitting there clung to Śiva out of fear of the upheaval : *Samutkṣipanyaḥ prithivībhrītāṃ varam varapradānasya chakāra śulināḥ, Trasattuśārādrisutāsasambhramasvayaṃ grahāśleṣa-sukhena niṣkramaṃ*.⁸⁴

The popularity of this theme could also be gleaned in the epigraphs of this period in the North and South of India.⁸⁵ Its illustrations in Rajasthan are not so numerous and vivid in expression as to be compared with the exquisite sculptures in Ellora or the other masterpieces. However, they do convey the mixed emotions of fear and surprise, and remind one of the description in the *Priyadarśikā* : *Kailāsādrāvudaste parichalati gaṇeṣūllasat kautukeṣu, Kroḍam mātuh kumāre viśatī viśamuchi prekṣamāne saroṣam, Padāvaṣṭambhaśīdvapuṣi daśamukhe yāti pātalamulam, Kruddhopyaśliṣṭamūrtirbhayaghanamumayā pātu tuṣṭaḥ śivo naḥ*.⁸⁶

In Rajasthan, the earliest representation of this theme is found in the temple of Harihara at Osia (Jodhpur). It is carved in one of the subsidiary shrines dedicated to Śiva in the *Pañchāyatana* temple. Though the sculpture is much withered away with the effect of weather, the carving is still clearly visible. In the *Bahn*-temple at Nāgdā⁸⁷ (Udaipur, 10th century A.D.) in one of the sculptures, Śiva and Pārvatī are carved seated, Pārvatī clinging to Śiva with the demon lifting them. The special feature of this sculpture is that instead of the mountain, the seat is shown being uplifted by Rāvaṇa.

(ii) *Umā-Maheśvaramūrti* :—In Rajasthan, the most popular mode of sculptural representation of Śiva in the pacific form is that of Umā-Māheśvara. This is the reason why the *Rapamaṇḍna*, which was written in the 15th century A.D., on the basis of the prevailing iconographic traditions of Rajasthan, refers only to this form of Śiva-Pārvatī. In the earlier images of Umā-Māheśvara, Śiva is sometimes shown only with two hands, while in that of the later period He is shown with four hands. The *Viṣṇudharmottara*⁸⁸ and the *Matsya Purāṇa*⁸⁹ have also described this type of the image

of Śiva as having two or four arms. Examples of this type are also found in the sculptures of Rajasthan. For instance, in a sculpture of the Kalikāmātā temple (Chittorgarh), Śiva is depicted only with two hands, one holding a lotus flower and another caressing Umā.⁹⁰

Most of the sculptures of the later period are carved in accordance with the description of the iconographic texts like the *Rupamaṇḍana*⁹¹ and the *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*.⁹² The *Rupamaṇḍana* prescribes that the image of Śiva should be shown with four hands, holding a *triśūla* and a *mātulinga* fruit in the right hands, and one of the left hands should be shown holding a snake, and the other caressing Pārvatī. The sculptures of the later period of this type invariably depict Śiva with four hands and Gaṇeśa, Kārttikeya and Bhṛīṅgī as the accessory figures. Under the *padmāsana*, the bull Nandī is depicted and on the *prabhāvalī* Brahmā and Viṣṇu and below them two *chāmara-grāhiṇī* attendants are carved.⁹³ In Rajasthan, the sculptures representing this aspect are from Nāgḍā⁹⁴ (Udaipur), Jhālarāpāṭan (Jhālāwār),⁹⁵ Baḍolī (Kota), Kāmān (Bharatpur)⁹⁶ and the other parts where Śaivism was prevalent. Even in the Vaiṣṇava temples⁹⁷ and the temples belonging to the Śākta cult⁹⁸ this image was carved according to the tradition of *Pañchāyatana Pūjā*.

The sculptures representing the gods with their consorts always depict the latter with two hands. In the images of Umā-Māheśvara, Pārvatī holds either a mirror or a lotus in one hand and the other is kept on the shoulder of Śiva. Similarly, when the consorts of Brahmā and Viṣṇu are carved with them, they are always carved with two hands. The sculptors of the 7th and 8th centuries A.D., tried to give a human touch to the divine couple by carving Śiva as seated on the lotus seat,⁹⁹ with two arms—one holding lotus and the other embracing his consort, and Umā with a graceful and charming posture leaning towards Him but turning her face away from him with a gesture of shyness. The combination of emotions of love and shyness were given more prominence than the aspect of divinity. Sometimes, Umā-Māheśvara were also represented with their family. In such scenes, Gaṇeśa and

Kārttikeya were not shown as divine beings with four hands but are depicted as children, rejoicing in the presence of their parents.

There is an obvious change in the sculptures of Umā-Maheśvara of the 8th-9th century A.D., and the 10th-11th century A.D. The images of the later period become more and more elaborated. The ornaments are finely chiselled, the serenity of the face is not disturbed but the emotions and expressions of joy, love and shyness and the realistic touch in the divine couple is nowhere observed. The sculptures of Umā-Māheśvara at Nāgda,¹⁰⁰ Āhaḍ and that of Chandrabhāgā, now preserved at the Jhālāwār Museum, belonging to the later part of the 10th century A.D., depict the second phase.

(iii) *Kalyāṇasundara or Vivāhamūrti* :—The theme of Kalyāṇasundaramūrti depicting the marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī became popular in the Gupta period. It has been elaborately described by Kālidāsa in the *Kumārasambhavam*.¹⁰¹ Other poets have also referred to this event in the invocatory verses of their works. Harṣa has described the marriage ceremony : *Dhūmavyākuladriṣṭirindukiraṇairāhlādītākṣī punaḥ, Paśyanti varamutsukānatamukhī bhūyo hriyā brahmaṇaḥ, Serśya pādanakhendudarpanagate gangā dadhāne hare, Sparśādutpulakā karagrahavidhau guarī śivāyāstu vaḥ*.¹⁰² Thus, he vividly describes Pārvatī's mixed emotions of joy and her longing for Śiva, her feeling of constraint in the presence of Brahmā and others, and her jealousy of the presence of Gangā in the *jaṭās* of Śiva. Rājasekhara also portrays the picture of a blushing, bewildered and frightened Pārvatī : *Gonāsavinijoyitāyatajaratsarpāya baddhauṣadhiḥ, Kaṇṭhasthaya viśaya vīryamahate pāṇau maṇin bibhratī, Bharturbhūtagaṇāya gotrajaratīnirdiṣṭamantrākṣarā, Rakṣatvadrīsuta vivāhasamayā hrīta cha bhīta cha vaḥ*.¹⁰³

Epigraphic and other literary references to the marriage of Śiva-Pārvatī also indicate the popularity of this theme. The invocatory verses of an inscription recording the foundation and

endowment for the temple of Maṇḍaleśvara-Mahādeva portrays a graphic picture of Pārvatī at the time of marriage. It describes her as confused with excitement, quivering with delight, bubbling forth with pleasure ; and moving slowly with modesty and terrified at the hissing of snakes clinging to Śiva's arm, clenching her hand which was brought forward by the old ladies for Śiva. At the time of marriage, Pārvatī is described as — "*Bhrāntā sambhramataḥ sukhaṇmukulita visphāritāḥ kautukād vṛḍamantharita vivāhasamaye... devyaḥ*".¹⁰⁴

These emotions and the engaging demeanour of Pārvatī is also conveyed in sculpture. Numerous Śaiva temples depict this theme. At Ellora¹⁰⁵ itself, it is carved as many as four times. Thus we see the popularity of this theme with sculptors, poets and their patrons.

The sculptures of an earlier period depicting the marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī show Himālaya and Menā¹⁰⁶ performing the ceremony of giving their daughter to the bridegroom, while the sculptures of the later period depict Viṣṇu instead of Himālaya. In the Rāmeśvara cave at Ellora the Śiva-vivāha panel represents Menā with Himālaya and not Viṣṇu.¹⁰⁷ Here Viṣṇu is represented in the company of other gods, and has not been given much prominence.¹⁰⁸ The other examples of the early period as that of Elephanta¹⁰⁹ also depict Himālaya and Menā. The observation is further strengthened by the presence of another panel in the Dhumar Lena¹¹⁰ (Cave No. 29, Ellora), which was built later than the Rāmeśvara cave. Here Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī have taken the place of Himālaya and Menā for fulfilling the duty of the parents.

This theme was also very popular with the sculptors of Rajasthan during the 8th and 9th centuries. A beautiful example depicting the marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī was discovered in Kāmān (Bharatpur).¹¹¹ Though the upper part of the sculpture is badly damaged, it could be identified as Śiva leading Pārvatī round the fire in which Brahmā is shown making offerings. Another characteristic of this sculpture is that here instead of Himālaya and Menā, Viṣṇu is performing the ceremony of *Kanyādāna* by pouring

the sacred water. In this sculpture, on the side of Umā, there is also a figure having four hands holding a *mangala kalaśa*¹¹² with the natural hands, and the right rear-hand resting on the *gada* and the left one holding a *chakra*. At the back of the head of this figure is carved a lotus-*prabhāvalī*, signifying the presence of divinity. Its face is broken but from the attributes it is evident that the figure is of Viṣṇu performing the role of the bride's father. This is not only a special feature of the sculptures from Rajasthan but also of South India where Viṣṇu is also represented doing the duty of the father of Umā.

Another sculpture depicting the same theme has been discovered from the same region of Kāmān (Bharatpur).¹¹³ Here the faces of Śiva and Pārvatī are carved bigger in proportion to their bodies. This has spoiled the beauty of the image. The panel referred to above (Pl. XXXVI) has much better craftsmanship and beauty in comparison with this, although in the former the faces are mutilated, it is able to convey the emotions of joy and fear of Pārvatī.

The presence of the rivers – Gangā and Yamunā at the marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī as described by Kālidāsa also finds expression in the sculptures of this period in Rajasthan : *Mārte cha gangāyamune tadānīm sachāmāre devaṁ seviṣatām.*¹¹⁴ The two rivers, which took human forms to serve as the attendants of the Great God with fly-whisks in their hands, are carved in a panel of a small temple among the group of Harihara temples at Osia. Here the main panel depicts the scene of marriage and on either of its side are carved Gangā and Yamunā on their vehicles.

(2) **Ghōra or Terrific Aspect of Śiva**

The images representing the *ghōra* or terrific aspects of Śiva were not very popular, as examples of this variety are rarely found either in literature or in sculpture. Of course, the images representing Śiva in Tripurāntaka and Bhairava aspects are sometimes carved in the Śaiva temples of Rajasthan. Even the Tripurāntaka sculptures show Him wielding a bow and an arrow,

and standing in the *pratyālīḍha* posture of an archer. But there is no terrific expression on the face. It is only suggested by the garland of skulls and the *pratyālīḍha* posture. Sculptures depicting the Tripurāntakamūrti of Śiva are preserved in the temples of Nīlakaṇṭha (Alwar),¹¹⁵ Bāḍolī (Kota)¹¹⁶ and Rāmgarh (Kota).¹¹⁷

III

Other Representations of Śiva

Another important aspect of Śiva is His delineation as the master and teacher of dance, music, *yoga* and *jñāna*. The representation of these aspects of Śiva is very common in the temples of South India. In contrast in the North-West India, in the Paurāṇic and iconographic texts as well as in literature and sculptures all the other aspects i.e., the Viṇādhara, Jñāna and Yoga Dakṣiṇāmūrtis except dance are rarely represented.

(1) Nrīttamūrti of Śiva

In literature and all the treatises on dance, Śiva has been portrayed as the master of this art. Among them the earliest text, the *Nāṭyaśāstra* mentions Him as the originator of 108 *Karaṇas* of dance.¹¹⁸ He is also the originator of music, both instrumental and vocal, and of other arts. In the *Mahābhārata* Śiva is described as “*nrītyapriyo nītyanarto nartakassarvalālasaḥ*”.¹¹⁹ It was during the time of this epic that a clear picture had fully emerged of the dancing Śiva in the company of Gaṇeśa, Kārttikeya, Devī and the *Gaṇas*,¹²⁰ and the image of the multi-armed Śiva, holding different attributes and playing musical instruments while dancing.¹²¹ Similarly, Śiva’s proficiency in music is clearly elaborated in the *Śiva Sahasranāma* : “*namo nartanaśīlāya mukhavāditra vādine nāṭyopahāralubdhāya gītavāditra śāline*.”¹²² Besides, He imparted knowledge of all the sixty-four arts to Rīṣi Garga on the banks of Sarasvatī.¹²³

In the *Purāṇas*, He is named as — *nrītyaśīla*, *vādanaśīla*, *vāḍyanrītyapriya*¹²⁴ and *sarvatāryaninādī*,¹²⁵ which show his proficiency in dance and playing all the musical instruments.

Kalidāsa also describes various instruments which accompany Śiva's dance. The *Meghaduta* mentions natural orchestra being played at the time of Śiva's dance of victory. The sweet sound of bamboos giving the effect of *venu* and the thunder of the clouds giving the effect of *muraja*, a type of drum, form the musical accompaniments at the time of dance of the Great lord.¹²⁶ These aspects of Śiva are reflected in the sculptures of Naṭarāja which began to be carved from the 5th century A.D., as could be gleaned from the image discovered from Nagari (Rajasthan), the ancient Mādhyamika.¹²⁷ While describing the star-studded sky, Bāṇabhaṭṭa compares it with the forest of Śiva's hair clustered with *kuṭaja* flowers, when he tosses them in dance : *nrítottoddhatadhurjati jātaṭavī*.¹²⁸ This signifies that the carving of the image of the dancing Śiva was popular in the 7th century A.D. Viśākhadatta mentions Śiva celebrating the victory over Tripura and Gajāśura¹²⁹ by performing vigorous mode of dances in the burning ground. While performing such dances Śiva is shown holding an elephant's skin, wearing a garland of skulls : *Kāpālīmudvahantī srajamiva dhavalam kaumudīmityaparvā*,¹³⁰ and thus whitening the sky with the dust of the ashes of the cemetery by his vigorous tread during dance : *Ākaśam kāṣapūṣpachchhvimabhibhavatā bhasmanā śuklayantīm, pādasyāvīrabhavantīmavanatimavane rakṣataḥ svairapātaiḥ*.¹³¹

The dances of Śiva have been classified by many scholars mainly to the following categories, *tāṇḍava* and *lasya* or *sukumāra*. It is generally considered that the *tāṇḍava* represents the *ghora* aspect which is a mode of vigorous dance performed by Śiva. The *lasya* is a tender form of dance demonstrated by Pārvatī. Coomaraswamy has classified and described the dances of Śiva on the basis of the *Sthala Purāṇas* and the other South Indian texts into three aspects : (i) the *sāndhyānṛitya* which is performed by Śiva in the Himālayas with the divine chorus, (ii) the *tāṇḍava* which is associated with His *tāmasic* nature, as Bhairava in the burning ground, and (iii) the *Nāḍanta* which is the boon conferring dance as is believed to have been performed by Him in the assembly of Chidambaram Tillai.¹³² He categorises the sculptures of Elephanta, Ellora and Bhuvaneśvara in the *tāṇḍava* class for they represent the vigorous and the terrific nature of Śiva. This contention of

Coomaraswamy does not seem convincing as the sculptures of Ellora do not depict the terrific nature of the dance. The symbols denoting the wrath of Śiva or His terrific nature i.e., the presence of Apasmārapuruṣa under His feet, and the Bhairava or Vīrabhadra aspects are not represented in these sculptures. In fact, the word *tanḍava* does not signify the vigorous activity on the part of the dancer. Besides, even some of the texts on dance classify *nritya* as *tanḍava* and *lasya* – the masculine and feminine respectively.¹³³ *Lasya* suggests the *abhinaya* part of *nritya* and it is performed by *nāyikās* and *tanḍava* the pure dance which particularly includes the movements of head, arms and feet is masculine. As these two components of *nritya* could not be separated in *natya*, *lasya* was taken as tender dance or *sukumāra nritya* performed by females. Actually *lasya* included *gīta*, and other modes of expression of feelings during which the heroine was always seated rather than pure dance.¹³⁴ Bharata explains the ten varieties of *lasya* which enumerates *abhinaya* or expression of emotion of the *virahinī nāyika* through *gīta* and not by dance.¹³⁵ Therefore, the question of suggesting tender dance by the term *lasya* does not arise.

It should also be noted that the most authentic text, the *Nāṭyaśāstra* uses the word *tanḍava* as a generic term for all the 108 modes of dances. As they were first taught by Rīṣi Tanḍu, they are called *tanḍava*.¹³⁶ According to the *Nāṭyaśāstra* all the 108 *karāṇas* of dance were performed by Śiva,¹³⁷ and accordingly performed and taught to Bharata. These 108 modes do not denote only the vigorous dances, which could be performed by men alone. The inscribed illustrations of the 108 *karāṇas* with the labels of their definitions of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* on the *gopuram* walls of the Chidambaram¹³⁸ temple and in the Brihdiśvara temple¹³⁹ go to strengthen the fact that *tanḍava* was not performed by men only. Here all the *karāṇas* are illustrated only by women dancers. If *tanḍava* would have been meant for men alone, the sculptors would not have overlooked this aspect.

The contention that the *tanḍava* is a generic term is also supported by the fact that the 108 *karāṇas* described by Bharata contain both the types of dances - vigorous as well as tender.

Among the 108 *karaṇas*, *vartita* and *apaviddha*¹⁴⁰ indicate envy, jealousy, and anger,¹⁴¹ while the *pārśvakrānta*, *atīkrānta*, *nīsumbhita*, *elakakrīḍita*,¹⁴² etc., are the terrific modes of dances, which were favourite of Śiva¹⁴³ in the aspect when He destroys the evil forces of nature. It was considered proper to celebrate the victory through dance. Hence, these vigorous dancing modes were performed by Śiva after the destruction of Tripura, Apasmāra, Guṇāsura and at the time of the sacrifice of Dakṣa in order to destroy it. In the same way, the *Kaṭisama*, *lalita*¹⁴⁴ and *chatura* denote the *sukumāra* or tender form of the dances of Śiva : *Anchitaḥ syātīkaro vāmaḥ savyaśchatura eva tu, Dakṣiṇaḥ kuṭṭitaḥ pādaśchaturam tatprakīrtitam*.¹⁴⁵

On the basis of emotions, the dances of Śiva may be classified into two groups : (i) tender dancing and (ii) vigorous dancing. (i) In tender dancing all the pacific *karaṇas* and *angahāras* are used such as *lalita*, *chatura*, *kaṭisama*, etc. This type of dance has been named by Coomaraswamy¹⁴⁶ and Sheshadri¹⁴⁷ as the *sāndhyānritya*. The nomenclature given by these scholars is not convincing as the dances are not performed according to the time of the day like music, but according to the occasions and feelings. Bharata himself observes that all the modes of dance were performed by Śiva in the evenings : *Mayāpīdam smritam nrityam sandhyākaleṣu nrityatā Nānākaraṇasamyuktairangahārair vibhāṣitam*.¹⁴⁸ Therefore, to classify only tender dances as *sāndhyānritya* would be inadequate. (ii) The vigorous dances were performed by Śiva in the cemetery thereby signifying His victory over the evil forces. In the vigorous dances the *elakakrīḍita*,¹⁴⁹ *lalatatilaka*,¹⁵⁰ *vriśchika*,¹⁵¹ and the *kuñchita*¹⁵² *karaṇas*, and the *alīḍha*¹⁵³ *angahāra* were favourite of Śiva. These were performed mainly by Śiva to celebrate the victory over Tripura, Apasmāra and Gajāsura.

The *sukumāra nritya* is described as an expression of joy in the *Śiva Pradoṣa Stotra* and in the inscription of Vighraha Rāja II (1013 V.S.) found at Harṣanātha.¹⁵⁴ Coomaraswamy remarks that in this dance Śiva has only two arms, and He dances after

1030

enthroning the goddess upon the golden throne of the Himalayan peaks¹⁵⁵ in the evening, when the rays of the setting sun transform the snow-clad mountains into gold. Here Śiva dances to please the goddess with the divine chorus of Indra, Brahmā and other gods. The temple of Harṣanātha is also associated with this aspect of His dance of joy. The sculptures in this temple were carved according to this theme. The inscription (1013 V.S.) informs us that on this mount *Tripurāntaka-Śiva* expressed joy through dance, hence the god was called *Harṣa*, and the mount was called after Him as *Harṣagiri*.¹⁵⁶ All the gods and the *apsarasas* also shared in the joy of the Great Lord. This is also evident from the various panels of this place which represent the *apsarasas* and the *gaṇas* dancing in a joyous mood,¹⁵⁷ the dancing scene of the court of Indra,¹⁵⁸ and dancers surrounding Śiva and Pārvatī with all sorts of musical accompaniments.¹⁵⁹

In Northern India and specially in Rajasthan the sculptures of Śiva representing His tender modes of dancing are found in abundance, while those depicting His terrific nature in dance are totally absent. Except the *Matsya Purāṇa*,¹⁶⁰ none of the iconographic texts and the *Purāṇas* pertaining to this part of the country mention the carving of the dancing images of Śiva. He has been stated as the greatest exponent of dance in literature from the time of *Mahabharata*, but neither the iconographic texts nor the *Purāṇas* clearly mention the iconography of such images. The South Indian *Āgama* texts give detailed description of various *nrittamārtis* of Śiva on the basis of His multiple-hands.¹⁶¹ In addition to these sculptures representing His terrific aspect are also very common in South India. Hence the representations of *Apasmārapuruṣa*, *Gajāsura*, and the *karaṇas* such as *elakakriḍita*, *lalaṭatilaka* and *kuñchita*, and the *angahāras* such as *pariyasta*¹⁶² and *alīḍha*¹⁶³ are found only in South India. The terrific nature of the god is only hinted at by the carving of his tusks and the gaping mouth.

In Rajasthan the images of the dancing Śiva represent the *chatura*, *lalita*, *kaṭisama*, *sūchibheda* and *ardhvajānu* modes of dance. However, *Apasmārapuruṣa* is absent in them,¹⁶⁴ though he is invariably carved in South India. Conversely, *Nandī*, *gaṇas* and

the musical accompaniments are invariably carved with Natarāja Śiva in the sculptures of North India, but are rare in the South Indian sculptures. On the other hand, the sculptures of South India are invariably represented with four hands.

The images of Natarāja in North India are invariably carved with many hands as is suggested by the expression – *Bhujataruvana*¹⁶⁵ used by Kālidāsa for Śiva in the *Meghadūta*. It is interesting to note that Bāṇa, and Subandhu, and the later poets refer to the forest of arms of Śiva while he is dancing : *pralayakālatanḍava prasāritabhujasahasraṃ*,¹⁶⁶ and *Mahānāṭa bāhuvaneneva, baddhabhujamgamakena*.¹⁶⁷ In Rajasthan, the image of Natarāja preserved in the Navadurgā temple near Chandrabhāgā (ca. 7th–8th century A.D.) comprises all the qualities of a North Indian Natarāja. Though one foot and the lower part of the torso are badly damaged, it is enough to show the *charī* movements of the legs. It could be guessed by the position of one foot which is in the *samapāda* posture, and the position of the *karihasta* of the left hand that the other damaged leg must have been carved in *urdhvajānu*, and the leg whose foot is carved in *samapāda* must have been *kutṭchita*. The image has sixteen hands holding various attributes. He is performing the *chatura karaṇa* with the normal pair of hands. Three pairs of arms are carved in the *uromaṇḍala mudrā*. Among the musical accompaniments two *mridangas* are placed crosswise, and the *vādaka* in dancing posture is noteworthy. Pārvatī is depicted expressing fear and surprise but still allured to Śiva. Her feelings are represented through the swing of her body turning away from the god, and yet turning her face towards him. The tusks and the open mouth of Natarāja suggest his terrific aspect.¹⁶⁸

Another interesting example of Natarāja in Rajasthan is found in the temple at Bāḍolī.¹⁶⁹ Here Śiva is performing *lalita karaṇa* with one hand in *karihasta*, the other in *latahasta* and two in *uromaṇḍala* movement, as is described by Bharata : *Karihasto bhavet vāmo dakṣiṇaścha pravartitah, Bahusah kutṭitah pādogyeyam tallalitam budhaih*.¹⁷⁰ The position of the feet depicts the movement of *nikuṭṭaka*,¹⁷¹ in which the left leg is placed on the

now lost
& stolen

ground in *samapāda* while the right leg is raised in such a manner that its toe only touches the ground which then raised fully to the *ūrdhvajānu* position and finally stamped on the ground.

The main characteristic of this sculpture is that here Gangā and Yamunā are represented with *pūrṇaghaṭas* on their respective vehicles on either side of Naṭarāja. At Bāḍolī there are some more images of Naṭarāja Śiva carved on the lintels of the door-frames. They are shown performing the *chatura karaṇa*.

Another aspect of the images of Naṭarāja is to represent Him dancing among the Mātrikās. In these sculptures He is invariably represented performing the *chatura karaṇa* with *kuñchita mudrā* of the feet. The sculpture from Ābānerī¹⁷² is noteworthy as here He is not only shown playing on the *vīṇā* with his natural hands, but is also shown dancing with the Mātrikās. Śiva's proficiency in music is generally represented by a *vīṇā* in His hand. This aspect of Vīṇādharamūrti was more popular in South India, though solitary examples are also found in Rajasthan. One such sculpture comes from Chandrabhāga.¹⁷³ Here the dancing Śiva is represented holding a *vīṇā* in one hand.

Śiva as a master and teacher of dance, music, *yoga* and *jñāna* has also been referred to in the contemporary literature and epigraphs of South India, as this aspect of Śiva was popular mainly in South India. In North India only some examples of this type are found. The images, depicting Śiva as a teacher, are called *Dakṣiṇāmūrti*. In these images the natural right hand is always shown in *vyākhyānamudrā*. When the images of the dancing Śiva are represented with *vyākhyānamudrā*, they could be grouped under the head of Nṛtta-Dakṣiṇāmūrti in the same manner as the image representing Him as a teacher of music is known as Vīṇādhara-Dakṣiṇāmūrti. It is mentioned in an inscription from South India that Śiva's dance cannot be understood by ordinary people; it is only Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Nārada and Skanda - the divine beings who can become an audience to his performance.¹⁷⁴ This aspect of Śiva's dance has been represented in one of the sculptures of the Sun Temple at Jhālarāpāṭan (10th century A.D.). In this

sculpture Śiva is not only carved as dancing in ecstasy but also demonstrating the art of dancing among the gods and *ṛṣis*. This is clearly evident from the *vyākhyānamudrā* of His natural right hand. Brahmā and Viṣṇu, as His disciples, are shown as witnessing His dance with awe, standing with folded-hands on either side of him. Carved with ten hands He is shown performing the *chatura karaṇa*. His left hand is in *karihasta mudrā*, while the other two hands are in *uromaṇḍala*, holding a snake over the head like a canopy. The other attributes are not clearly visible. The *Matsya Purāṇa*¹⁷⁵ also mentions that the image of Naṭarāja should be carved surrounded by *devas*, Nandikeśvara, and other gods in a praying posture. This scheme of representation has been followed by the sculptors in the temple at Jhālarāpāṭan. Here the central panel represents the dancing-Śiva surrounded by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Nandī, while the side panels depict many gods and goddesses. Specially the *vyākhyānamudra* of the right hand of the dancing-Śiva and the *namaskāramudrā* of Viṣṇu and Brahmā suggests that this is an image of the Nritta-Dakṣiṇāmūrti of Śiva.¹⁷⁶

(2) Siva as Mahayogi and Lakulisa

Another aspect of Śiva that was represented in sculpture, was that of a teacher of *yoga* and *jñāna*. Śiva as a *yogī* has been described by Kālidāsa in the *Kumārasambhava*. He states that the images of Yogīśvara Śiva should be carved seated in *yogāsana* which is also known as *paryankabandha*, the hands should be kept in *dhyāna mudrā* : *uttānapāṇidvayasanniveśat praphullarājīva-mivāṅkamadhye*, he should be wearing a deer skin – *kriṣṇattvacham granthimatīm dadhānam* and the gaze should be directed towards the tip of the nose—*netrairavisṇandita pakṣmamālairlakṣyīkrita-ghrāṇamadhomayūkhaiḥ*.¹⁷⁷

With the popularisation of the Lakulīśa sect this aspect of Yogīśvara Śiva was transformed in the seated images of Lakulīśa¹⁷⁸ with two hands—one of them holding *Lakuṭa* and the other the *mātulinga* fruit : *Nakulīśam ardhvamedhram padmāsanamupasthitam, Dakṣiṇe mātulingam cha vame daṇḍaḥ*

prakīrtitah.¹⁷⁹ As the Lakulīśa and Yogīśvara aspects of Śiva dealt with the same quality of asceticism, there was a similarity in their depiction.

Lakulīśa was the 28th incarnation of Śiva,¹⁸⁰ who was the systematizer¹⁸¹ of the Pāśupata Śaiva sect. Bhandarkar, on the basis of epigraphs, has decided the date of this incarnation to be the first quarter of the 2nd century A.D., at Kāyāvarohaṇa (modern Kārvaṇa) in the Dabhoi district of Baroda.¹⁸²

The earliest example of the temple on whose dedicatory block (*lalāṭa bimba*) Lakulīśa is carved, comes from the Śītalesvara Mahādeva temple (7th century A.D.)¹⁸³ at Chandrabhāgā (Jhālarāpāṭan). On the basis of evidence it could be said that the images of Lakulīśa began to be carved and worshipped from the 7th century A.D., and the temples were dedicated to him, though the main object of worship¹⁸⁴ remained a *linga*.

In the Udaipur region, epigraphs at the temple of Ekalingaji of 971 A.D.,¹⁸⁵ and 1274-1296 A.D.,¹⁸⁶ and at Palāḍi (near Udaipur) in the temple of Vāmeśvara (1116 A.D.)¹⁸⁷ and the Lakulīśa images from Ekalinga and Chittorgarh¹⁸⁸ datable to the 8th century A.D., are enough to prove that his worship was popular in the 8th century A.D., and continued to be so till the end of the 10th century A.D. Many such temples in Rajasthan have been mentioned by Bhandarkar.¹⁸⁹

Although the main centres of the worship of Lakulīśa in Rajasthan were Ekalinga (Udaipur), Bādoli (Kota) and Chandrabhāgā (Jhālarāpāṭan), his images have been discovered in the other parts of Western Rajasthan too. In the temples of Belar, Nānā, Choṭan¹⁹⁰ and Mount Abu¹⁹¹ the images of Lakulīśa have been found on the doors of the sanctum. The images at Nānā (1290 V.S.=1233 A.D.) and Choṭan (1365 V.S.=1308 A.D.)¹⁹² have inscriptions which clearly indicate that the worship of Lakulīśa was very popular in this region up to the 13th century A.D. Another image on one of the lintels of the doorway in the ruins of a temple at Bādoli represents Lakulīśa on the dedicatory block. He is shown

seated and flanked by Brahmā and Viṣṇu on either side. The figure has four hands, but the attributes are broken. The *urdhvaretas* characteristic is clearly visible, and is enough to identify the image as that of Lakulīśa.¹⁹³

The continuation of the Yogīśvara aspect in the images of Lakulīśa is also clearly evident in the sculptures from Rajasthan. In the *Sās* temple at Nāgdā¹⁹⁴ there is an image of Śiva seated in *padmāsana* with four hands ; among the two upper hands one is holding the *triśūla* and the other a snake, and among the two lower hands, one is having an *akṣamālā* and another a *mātulinga* fruit. Two pot-bellied figures are carved seated near the lotus seat. The two figures perhaps represent the disciples of Lakulīśa. This image depicts the transitory stage of Yogīśvara, which was in the process of being merged itself completely with that of Lakulīśa.

In Rajasthan, the discovery of Lakulīśa figures with *jaṭamukūṭa* in place of the coiled hair like those of Buddha and *jina* images also supports the above thesis. It shows a closer similarity and identity between Yogīśvara and Lakulīśa as the latter was carved with four hands and *jaṭamukūṭa*. A damaged figure of Lakulīśa wearing a *jaṭamukūṭa* and holding a *lakūṭa* and some object probably a *mātulinga* fruit is preserved in the Rajputana Museum, Ajmer.¹⁹⁵ In the beginning of the 9th century A.D., the image of Lakulīśa was carved with the characteristics of both, the Lakulīśa and the Yogī Śiva. He was represented with four hands, a *jaṭamukūṭa*, a *śrīvatsa lañchhana* and seated in *padmāsana* with his gaze fixed at the tip of the nose (*nāsāgradīṣṭi*).¹⁹⁶ By the beginning of the 11th century A.D., the iconography of Lakulīśa reached its final stage¹⁹⁷ when his image began to be carved as an ascetic. Hence his images show a close resemblance with those of Buddha and Tīrthankara¹⁹⁸ who were also ascetics. Some scholars have tried to explain this resemblance in the light of the spirit of reconciliation and tolerance between the different sects.¹⁹⁹ If this had been the reason for carving the images of Lakulīśa, it should have also been found where Buddhism and Jainism were popular and strong. But that was not the case. In fact, these images are found only in the Śaiva temples where

Śiva-lingas are enshrined. Most of the Lakulīśa images are discovered at the sites which were centres of Śaivism. Moreover, in Rajasthan the Lakulīśa images are absent in the temples of Osia, Buchkalā, Ābānerī and Nīlakanṭha, where besides Śaivism other religions were also popular. The absence of the Lakulīśa images from these sites substantiates the fact that the similarity was not due to tolerance towards other religions but the similarities in the mode of life of Buddha, Jina and Lakulīśa. They led the life of ascetics and propagated their respective religions. It is this common characteristic that led the sculptors to carve them in a similar manner.

The representation of Śaiva themes in sculpture ranges from the symbolic form of the phallic emblem to the iconic form of Śiva in its pacific and terrific aspects. Śiva has been represented as the originator of dance, music and *yoga*. These aspects have found expression in the images representing dance, playing Viṇa and practising *yoga* as Lakulīśa.

References

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3. *ETSAI*, pp. 1-22 ; See also, Banerjea, *Religion in Art and Archaeology*, pp. 42-44.
4. *ETSAI*, p. 23.
5. *ERE*, Vol. VI, pp. 548, 402, 417.
6. Marshall, *op. cit.*, pl. XIV, figs. 2, 4 and 5.
7. *Rigveda*, X, 99, 3 ; *Rigveda*, VII, 24, 5.
8. *VSMRS*, p. 110.
9. *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, Gita Press, Gorakhpur, 1938, IV, vs. 11.
10. Banerjea, *Religion in Art and Archaeology*, pp. 66-67.
11. *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, IV, vs. 11.
12. *VSMRS*, p. 114, 1 n.
13. J. N. Banerjea, *Pauranic and Tantric Religion*, Calcutta, 1966, p. 78.

14. *MBH*, Anuśāsanaparva, ch. 14, vs. 227.
15. *ETSAI*, p. 4.
16. *ERE*, Vol. VI, p. 417.
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18. *Matsya Purāṇa*, ch. 263, vs. 23.
19. V. S. Agrawala, *Śiva Mahādeva — The Great God*, Veda Academy, Varanasi, 1966, pls. IV-V ; See also, Stella Kramrisch, *The Art of India—Introduction to the Traditions of Indian Art*, Phaidon Press, London, 2nd edn., 1955, p. 46.
20. V. S. Agrawala, *op. cit.*, pl. II ; *HIIA*, fig. 68.
21. *EHI*, Vol. II, pt. I, pl. 1.
22. *EHI*, Vol. II, pt. I, pls. 2-3, pp. 65-68.
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27. Heinrich Zimmer, *The Art of Indian Asia*, Vol. I, Text, Bollingen Series, XXXIX, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1968, p. 353.
28. R. C. Agrawal, "Gāmaḍī (Bharatpur) kṛ Advitīya Śiva linga", *Śodha Patrikā*, XXIII, (1), 1972, pp. 67-70 ; R. C. Agrawal, "Kushāṇa Shivalingas from Rajasthan", *Rhythm of History*, I, 1973-74, p. 9.
29. Bāṇabhaṭṭa, *Harṣacharitam*, p. 20.
30. *Rāpamaṇḍana*, IV, vs. 92.
31. *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, III, ch. 48, vs. 1-14.
32. *Ibid.*, III ch. 48, vs. 3.
33. *DHI*, p. 461.
34. *Rāpamaṇḍana*, ch. IV vs. 94.
35. Stella Kramrisch, "The Image of Mahadeva in the cave temple on Elephanta Island", *Ancient India*, II, 1946, pls. I-VII ; *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, III, ch. 48, vs. 9-17.
36. F. Kielhorn, "Kansua Stone Inscription of Śivagaṇa, the Mālava year 795 expired=(738-739 A.D.)", *Indian Antiquary*, XIX, 1890, pp. 55-62. For illustration, See Chapter IV.

37. Parimala Padmagupta, *Navasāhasāṅkacharitam*, XVIII, 5I, p. 283.
38. R. C. Agrawal, "Kushāṇa Shivalingas from Rajasthan", *Rhythm of History*, I, 1973-74, p. 8.
39. All the sculptures of Maheśamūrti constitute the back wall of the temples. It could be seen in the temples at Chittorgarh, Bādoli, Elephanta, etc.
40. *Rāpamaṇḍana*, ch. IV, vs. 92.
41. Stella Kramrisch, "The Image of Māhadeva in the Cave Temple on Elephanta Island", *op. cit.*, pp. 4-8, pls. I-VII.
42. E. B. Havell, *Ideals of Indian Art*, J. Murray Albemarle Street, London, 1911, pp. 66-68, fn. 1 ; See also, Pramod Chandra, ed., *The Art Heritage of India*, Bombay, 1964, p. 150, fn. 1 ; Vincent A. Smith, *A History of Fine Arts in India and Ceylon*, Bombay 3rd edn., 1961, p. 83.
43. *EHI*, Vol. II, pt. II, pp. 382-85.
44. For discussion pertaining to the Syncretistic images of Harihara, Hariharapitāmaha, Sūrya-Hariharapitāmaha, Ardhanārīśvara, etc., See Chapter VII.
45. Two Śiva *lingas* of this type are preserved in the Rajputana Museum, Cf. Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, Ex. Nos. I (26) 15 ; (25) 16.
46. See, Pl. XXXII.
47. *Īśāna Śivagurudevapaddhati*, (III, XII, 38) observes that the face of Vāmadeva should be '*strī vilāsaḥ*'. Quoted from S. Kramrisch, "The Image of Mahādeva in the Cave temple on Elephanta Island", *op. cit.*, p. 6.
48. *EHI*, Vol. II, pt. II, pl. CXVIII.
49. *EHI*, Vol. II, pt. II, p. 385.
50. *Ibid.*, Appendix, pp. 51-54.
51. The sculpture is now preserved in the Rajputana Museum, Ajmer. Ex. No. I (27) 374. See, Pl. XXXV.
52. F. Kielhorn, "Haras Stone Inscription of Chāhamāna Vighraha-Rāja EI, II, pp. 115-130.
53. In the *Purāṇas*, this story has been identically described. *Vāyu Purāṇa*, ch. 55 vs. 21-30 ; *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, II, ch. 26, vs. 21-30.
54. *EHI*, Vol. II, pt. I, pl. XIV, fig. 1.
55. Y. Gopal Reddy, "The Image of Lingodbhavamūrti at Pānugal", *JIH*, L, (1), April 1972, pp. 914, and plate.
56. *EHI*, Vol. II, pt. I, pl. XIV, fig. 2.
57. V. S. Agrawala, *Śiva Mahādeva - the Great God*, Varanasi, 1966, pl. III. The sculpture is now preserved in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi.
58. Banerjea wrongly claims that on the blazing column there is a figure of Śiva, There is no such figure on the column. Cf. *JISOA*, Vol. IX, pl. X.

59. *Harivaṃśa Purāṇa* (Khilabhāga, Mahābhārata), Geeta Press, Gorakhpur, II, ch. 91, vs. 37.
60. J. Ph. Vogel, *The Goose in Indian Literature and Art*, Memoirs of the Kern Institute, No. II, Leiden, 1962, p. 13.
61. Śiva-lingas are preserved in the sanctums of the temples at Ellora, Elephanta, Nīlakaṇṭha (Alwar), Harṣanātha (Sikar), Bāḍolī (Kota) and Kansua (Kota).
62. *EHI*, Vol. II, pt. I, pp. 143-202 ; See also, *DHI*, pp. 464-66.
63. Rao has described all these types in a list of twenty-five images and has also illustrated them from the sculptural examples. See, *EHI*, Vol. II, pts. I & II, pp. 369-70.
64. *Rāpamaṇḍana*, ch. IV, vs. 27-29. Other forms of the pacific aspect of Śiva which have been discussed by Sūtradhāra Maṇḍana are - the Dvādaśa Rudras - twelve forms of Śiva depicting different aspects, and the composite forms of Harihara, etc. See, *Rāpamaṇḍana*, ch. IV, vs. 1-26 and 30-33.
65. *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, III, ch. 48.
66. *Ibid*, ch. 55.
67. Hemādri, *Chaturvarga Chintāmaṇi, Vrata Khaṇḍa*, Ad. I, p. 125. Bibliotheca Indica Series, Hemadri has quoted from *Viṣṇudharmottara Pūrāṇa*.
68. *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, ch. 59.
69. Parimala Padmagupta himself claims to be the contemporary of Paramāra Bhojarāja and Muṇja. See, *Navasāhasāṅkacharita*, I, vs. 8-9, 15-16.
70. Pratipal Bhatia, *The Paramaras*, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, 1970, p. 8 ; *RTA*, pp. 549-550.
71. Parimala, Padmagupta, *Navasāhasāṅkacharitaṃ*, XVIII, vs. 16.
72. "Dehārdhavaritigirijā vihitābhyasāya sandhyāpraṇāmaṇjalaye ...", *Ibid*, XVIII, vs. 16, 17, 18.
73. Kālidāsa, *Mālavikāgnimitraṃ*, I, vs. 1.
74. Kālidāsa, *Kumārasambhavaṃ*, VI, vs. 26.
"Viditaṃ vo yathā svarthā na me kaschit pravrittayaḥ.
Nanu murtībhirasṭābhiritthaṃ bhutosmi sūchitaḥ".
75. Kālidāsa, *Abhijñāna Śākuntalaṃ*, I, vs. 1.
76. Kālidāsa, *Kumārasambhavaṃ*, ch. 10, vs. 26.
77. F. Kielhorn, "Bheraghat Stone Inscription of the queen Allahānādevi, 1155 A.D.", *EI*, Vol. II, vs. 3, p. 10 ; See also, V. S. Agrawala, *Śiva Mahādeva-the Great God*, Veda Academy, Varanasi, 1966, pp. 23-27.
78. V. V. Mirashi, "Stone Inscription of Jojalladeva II, A.D. 1167-68", *CII*, Vol. IV, vs. 2, p. 522.
79. V. S. Agrawala has considered an image from Parel (Bombay, ca. 8th century A.D.) as the Aṣṭamurti of Śiva. In this sculpture there are seven figures emerging from one another ; three frontally and four laterally. Cf. V. S. Agrawala,

Śiva Mahādeva—The Great God, pl. XVI, p. 62. The opinion of V.S. Agrawala does not stand to reason on the ground that these are only seven figures not eight. Sivaramamurti's interpretation of this figure of Śiva, as the personification of Sapta-svaramayamūrti of music, signifying the aspect of Śiva as a master of dance and music seems more plausible. Cf. C. Sivaramamurti, *Naṭarāja in Art, Thought and Literature*, National Museum, New Delhi, 1974, p. 176.

80. Kālidāsa, *Raghuvamśa*, I, 1.
81. Kālidāsa, *Mālavikāgnimitram*, I, 1.
82. Kālidāsa in *Meghadūta* refers to the Kailāsa as uplifted by Rāvaṇa, cf. *Meghadūta*, I, 58.
83. Parimala Padmagupta, *op. cit.*, XI, 58.
84. Māgha, *Śiṣupālavadham*, I, vs. 5.
85. C. Sivaramamurti, "Iconographic Gleanings from Epigraphy", *Arts Asiatiques*, IV, p. 42.
86. Harṣa, *Priyadarśikā*, ed., M. R. Kale, 1st edn., Messers Gopal Narayan and Co., Bombay, 1926, I, vs. 2, pp. 1-2.
87. R. C. Agrawal, "Unpublished Sculptures from Rajasthan", *Bhāratīya Vidyā*, XXV, p. 47.
88. *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, Quoted by Hemādri, *Chaturvargachintāmaṇi, Vrata Khaṇḍa*, Ad. I, p. 125.
89. *Matsya Purāṇa*, Venkatesvara Press, Bombay, 1867, ch. 260, vs. 11-12.
90. See, Pl. XXXIII.
91. *Rāpamaṇḍana*, IV, vs. 27-29.
92. *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, III, ch. 55, p. 178. *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* prescribes both types of images—two armed and four armed.
93. Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, Ex. No. 27 (Image of Śiva-Pārvatī from Jhālarāpāṭan); Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, Ex. No. I (20) 288 (Image of Śiva-Pārvatī from Katara); Image of Śiva-Pārvatī at the Alwar Museum.
94. Image of Umā-Māheśvara at the *Sās* temple at Nāgdā. See, Pl. XXXIV.
95. Jhālāwār Museum, Nos. 39, 89, 99.
96. Satya Prakash, "Recently discovered sculptures from Sikar Region and Kāmān, Rajasthan", *JISOA*, (N. S.), Vol. II, p. 58.
97. In the principal niches of the Vaiṣṇava temples at Āhaḍ and Nāgdā, and in the Sun temple at Chittorgarh the images of Umā-Māheśvara are *in situ*.
98. In one of the subsidiary shrines of the Sachiyāmātā temple (Osia) the image of Umā-Māheśvara is *in situ*.
99. Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, Ex. No. 341 (Image of Umā-Māheśvara from Kusma, Sirohi, 7th-8th century A.D.). The image of Umā-Māheśvara of the

Kalikāmārā temple at Chittorgarh could be cited as the other example of this type of representation.

100. See, Pl. XXXIV.
101. Kālidāsa, *Kumārasambhavam*, VII, vs. 76-80.
102. Harṣa, *Priyadarśikā*, ed., M. R. Kale, Messers Gopal Narayana & Co., Bombay, 1928, I, vs. 1.
103. Rājasekhara, *Viddhaśālabhañjikā*, ed., R. K. Tripathi, Vidya Bhawan Sanskrit Granthamala, Chowkhamba, Varanasi, 1965, I, 3, p. 2.
- ✓ 104. L. D. Barnett, "Arthūṇa Inscription of the Paramāra Chāmuṇḍa-Rāja, V. S. 1136", *EI*, XIV, pp. 295-310, vs. 1.
105. R. Sengupta, "The panels of Kalyāṇasundaramūrti at Ellora", *Lalit Kala*, No. 7, April 1960, pp. 14-18, pls. IV-V.
106. For instance the Śiva-vivāha panel in the Rāmeśvara cave at Ellora (Cf. *Lalit Kala*, No. 7, pl. IV, figs. 1, 2) and Elephanta (Cf. *EHI*, Vol. II, pt. I, pl. CIII, p. 346 ; *Lalit Kala*, No. 7, pl. VI, fig. 5).
107. On the basis of the South Indian sculptures of the later period, T. A. G. Rao has wrongly identified the figures at the Rāmeśvara Cave as of Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī. Cf. *EHI*, Vol. II, pt. I, pp. 347-349.
108. R. Sen Gupta, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-16, pl. IV, fig. 2.
109. *EHI*, Vol. II, pt. I, pl. CIII, p. 346.
110. R. Sen Gupta, *op. cit.*, p. 17 ; pl. V, fig. 4.
111. Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, Ex. No. I (28) 13.
112. See, Pl. XXXVI.
113. Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, Ex. No. I (29) 12.
114. Kālidāsa, *Kumārasambhavam*, VII, 42.
115. See, Pl. XXXVIII.
116. See, Pl. XXXIX.
117. Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, Vol. II, pl. LXII.
118. Bharata, *Nāṭyaśāstra*, IV, vs. 13-19.
119. *MBH*, XIII, ch. 17, vs. 50.
120. *Ibid.*, VII, ch. 80, vs. 39-40.
121. *Ibid.*, XIII, ch. 14, vs. 154, 156.
122. *Ibid.*, XII, ch. 284, vs. 88.
123. *Ibid.*, XIII, ch. 18, vs. 38.
124. *Vāyu Purāṇa*, ch. 24, vs. 142-143 ; ch. 30, vs. 198-199.
125. *Linga Mahā Purāṇa*, I, ch. 65, vs. 82, 84.

126. Kālidāsa, *Meghadūta*, I, 56.
 “Śabdāyante madhuramanilaiḥ kīchakāḥ pūryamāṇās samraktābhistripuravijayo
 gīyate kinnarībhiḥ. Nirhrādaste muraḥa iva chet kandareṣu dhvanissyāt
 sangītārtho nanu paśupatestatrabhāvī samagraḥ”.
127. R. C. Agrawal, “Rajasthan kī Prāchīna Mūrtikalā men Naṭarāja Śiva”,
Maru Bharati, Vol. XV (4), January 1968, pp. 210-21.
128. Bāṇabhaṭṭa, *Harṣacharitaṃ*, I, p. 15 ; See also, V. S. Agrawala, “A Survey of
 Gupta Art and some sculptures from Nachna Kutharā and Khoh”. *Lalit
 Kala*, No. 9, 1961, pp. 16-26.
129. Viśākhadatta, *Mudrā Rākṣasaṃ*, ed., and tr., S. R. Ray, 3rd edn., Calcutta,
 1956, I, vs. 2 ; III, vs. 20.
130. *Ibid.*, III, vs. 20.
131. *Ibid.*, I, vs. 2.
132. A. K. Coomaraswamy, *Dance of Śiva*, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1948,
 pp. 83-85.
133. Kapila Vatsyayana, *Classical Indian Dance in Literature and the Arts*, Sangeet
 Nataka Akademy, 1968, p. 29.
134. Surendranath Dixit, *Bharata aur Bhāratīya Nāṭyakalā*, Rajkamal Prakashan,
 Delhi, 1970, pp. 472-73.
135. Bharata, *op. cit.*, IV, vs. 307-308 and 315-318.
136. *Ibid.*, vs. 18, 267-268 and 275-276.
137. *Ibid.*, vs. 13-19.
138. The relief sculptures on all the four main *Gopurams* depict women dancers
 demonstrating various modes of dance. The sculptures of the Eastern
Gopuram are labelled from the verses of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* explaining the
karaṇas. Vide, Venkata Narayanaswami Naidu, Srinivasulu Naidu,
 Venkata Rangayya Pantulu, *Tāṇḍava Lakṣanaṃ* or *The Fundamentals
 of Ancient Hindu Dancing*, Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, Reprint,
 1971, Appendix B, pp. 117-128, pl. XLII-XLIX ; See also, Anne
 Marie Gaston, *Śiva in Dance Myth and Iconography* Oxford University
 Press, Delhi, 1982, pp. 15-23, pls. 41 and 49.
139. P. R. Srinivasan, “The Nataraja Concept in Tamil Nadu Art”, *Roopalekha*,
 Vol. XXVII, (1), 1956, pp. 24-35.
140. Bharata, *Nāṭyaśāstra*, IV, vs. 64, 66.
*Kuñchitau maṇibandhe tu vyāvritaparivartitau,
 Hastau nipatitau chorvorvartitaṃ karaṇaṃ tu tāt.
 Āvritya śukatuṇḍākyam ūrupriṣṭhe nipātayet,
 Vakṣastho vāmahastaśchāpyapavidham tu tadbhavet.*
141. Naidu, Pantulu, *op. cit.*, p. 22.
142. Bharata, *op. cit.*, IV, vs. 124-25, 127, 158.

143. Naidu, Pantulu, *op. cit.*, p. 37.
144. Bharata, *op. cit.*, IV, vs. 80, 94.
145. *Ibid.*, IV, vs. 100.
146. Coomaraswamy, *op. cit.*, pp. 83-84.
147. M. Seshadri, "Sāndhya Tāṇḍava", *Artibus Asiae*, XVIII, 1955, Institute of Fine Arts, New York, University, pp. 117-120.
148. Bharata, *op. cit.*, IV, vs. 13.
149. *Ibid.*, IV, vs. 159.
Talasañcharapādābhyāmutplutya patanaṁ tu yat,
Sannataṁ valitaṁ gātramelakākriḍitaṁ tu tat".
150. *Ibid.*, vs. 112.
"Vriśchikaṁ charaṇaṁ kritvā pādasyānguṣṭhakena tu,
Lalāṣe tilakaṁ kuryāllalāṣatilakaṁ cha tat".
151. *Ibid.*, vs. 109.
"Bāhuśīrṣāñchitau hastau pādaḥ priṣṭhāñchitastathā
Dūrasannatapriṣṭhaṁ cha vriśchikaṁ tatprakīrtitaṁ".
152. *Ibid.*, vs. 114.
Ādyaḥ pādo nataḥ kāryaḥ savyahastaścha kuñchitaḥ.
Uttāno vāmapārśvaschatatkuñchitamudāhritaṁ".
153. *Ibid.*, IV, vs. 233-235.
"Ālīḍha vyansitau hastau bāhuśīrṣe nikuṭṭayet.
Nṛpuraścharaṇo vāmastathālātaścha dakṣiṇaḥ,
Tenaivākṣiptakaṁ kuryāduromaṇḍalakau karau.
Karihastaṁ kaṭichchhinnaṁ ālīḍhe samprayojayet".
154. F. Kielhorn, "Haras Stone Inscription of the Chāhamāna Vighraha Rāja", *EI*, II, p. 116-130.
155. Śiva Pradoṣa Stotra, Quoted from Coomaraswamy, *op. cit.*, pp. 83-84.
156. Kielhorn, "Haras Stone Inscription of the Chāhamāna Vighraha Rāja", *op. cit.*, vs. 1-3.
157. Some of the *Apsaras* are now placed in the sanctum of the temple. Besides, various dance panels are carved on the pillars and walls of the temple.
158. Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, Vol. II, pl. LXVIII.
159. Vatsyayana, *Classical Indian Dance in Literature and the Arts*, pl. 93.
160. *Matsya Purāṇa*, ch. 259, vs. 11-22.
161. *EHI*, Vol. II, pt. II, Appendix, pp. 115-133.
162. Bharata, *op. cit.*, IV, vs. 178-180. Angahāra means a set of *karaṇas* that are performed consecutively. *Paryasta angahāra* consists of *talapuṣpa*, *apaviddha*, *vartita*, and *nikuṭṭa karaṇas*, thereafter *pratyālīdha*, *nikuṭṭa*, *urūdvṛtta* and likewise *ākṣipta*, *uromaṇḍala*, *karihasta* and *Katichhinna karaṇas* are made. Cf. Naidu, Pantulu, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

163. *Ālīḍha angahāra* consists of *ālīḍha*, *nūpura*, *nikuṭṭa*, *uromaṇḍala*, *karihasta*, *kaṭichchhina* movements. *Nāṭyaśāstra*, IV, vs. 233-35.
164. Śivaramamurti, "Geographical and Chronological factors in Indian Iconography", *Ancient India*, No. 6, January 1950, p. 61.
165. Kālidāsa, *Meghadūta*, I, 36.
166. Bāṇabhaṭṭa, *Kādambarī*, p. 51.
167. Subandhu, *Vāsavadatta*, Line 115, p. 160.
- ✓ 168. Neelima Vashishtha, "Some Aspects of Dance as depicted in the Śaiva Sculptures of Rajasthan", *Cultural Contours of India*, pp. 200-204 and pls. LIX, LXI.
169. See, Pl. XXXVII; See also, C. Sivaramamurti, *Naṭarāja in Art Thought and Literature*, National Museum, 1974, pp. 309-321.
170. Bharata, *op. cit.*, IV, vs. 94.
171. *Ibid.*, vs. 69-70.
172. *Marg*, XII, 1959, p. 30, pl. 2.
173. Cf. Jhālāwār Museum, Ex. No. 7.
174. Sivaramamurti, *Naṭarāja in Art, Thought and Literature*, pp. 1-2.
175. *Matsya Purāṇa*, ch. 259, vs. 22-26
176. See, Pl. VI.
177. Kālidāsa, *Kumārasambhavam*, III, vs. 45-47.
178. K. V. Soundara Rajan, "Lakulīśa and Linga polymorphism", *VII*, II, 1964, pl. 117.
179. *Vijñānakarmāvatāra Vāstu Śāstram* (MSS).
Quoted from M. R. Majumdar, "Lakulīśa images from Western India", *P. K. Gode Commemoration Volume*, 1960, III, p. 108.
180. *Chintra Praśastī*, Composed in 1274-1296 A.D., *EI*, I, pp. 211 ff; *Vāyu Purāṇa*, Māheśvarāvatāra Yoga, ch. XXIII, vs. 217-25; *Linga Purāṇa*, XXIV, vs. 124-133.
181. Banerjea, *Religion in Art and Archaeology*, 1968, pp. 52-53.
182. Bhandarkar, *ASIAR*, 1906-07, pp. 179-190.
183. *HIEA*, p. 449; Cunningham, *Report of Tour in the Punjab and Rajputana*, A. S. I., 1883-84, pp. 125-131.
184. Bhandarkar, "A Ekalingaji Stone Inscription and the origin and History of the Lakulīśa Sect", *JBBRAS*, XXII, p. 158. An inscription containing information about the worship of Lakulīśa has been found at Chandrāvati, Jhālārūpāṭan. It mentions some one by the name of Īśānājamu, who is compared to Lakulīśa. "... Īśānājamukhyāto Lakulīśa ivābhavat".
185. *Ibid.*

186. Buhler, "Chintra Praśasti", *EI*, I, p. 2.
187. A. K. Vyas, "Pāḍi Inscription of Guhila Ari Simha, V. S. 1173", *EI*, XXX, pp. 8-12.
188. R. C. Agrawal, "Two Standing Lakulīśa sculptures from Rajasthan", *JIH*, XIV, (3-4), 1965, pp. 388-391, figs. F & G.
189. Bhandarkar, *PRASWC*, 1905, pp. 48, 52, 54-57 and 60.
190. Bhandarkar, *ASIAR*, 1906-07, pp. 184-185.
191. M. R. Majumdar, "Lakulīśa Images from Western India", *op. cit.*, p. 119, fig. B.
192. Bhandarkar, *ASIAR*, 1906-07, pp. 184-185.
193. See, Pl. XL.
194. See, Pl. ~~XL~~ ^{+ VIII}
195. Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, Ex. No. 338 (Image of Lakulīśa from Kusma, Sirohi, 9th-10th century A.D.).
196. Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, Ex. No. A (44) 300. (Image of Yogīśvara Śiva from Chandrāvati, Sirohi).
197. Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, Ex. No. 51 (Image of Lakulīśa from Arthuṇa, Banswara, 11th century A.D.).
198. See, Pl. XLII.
199. K. P. Nautiyal, "Two Lakulīśa Representations from Kumaon", *JOI*, (Baroda), XIII, (1), 1963, p. 58 ; *DHI*, p. 6





5

Shakti Worship And Representation of Goddesses

The worship of the female energy in some form or the other has been prevalent since the beginning of civilization. In early times it was conceived as mother-goddess and was represented both in iconic and aniconic forms. The finds of ring-stones of various sizes, the terracotta sealings and the small female figurines¹ from the Indus Valley indicate the prevalence of the cult of worshipping the female principle of creation. The large number of these ring-stones suggests the popularity of this cult at that time. This has made Mackay remark that they were worshipped in every "house in the ancient Indus cities probably in a recess or on a bracket on the wall".²

In the Vedic religion the male deities were accorded more importance than the goddesses, even then the "Devī Sūkta" of the *Rigveda*³ emphatically states the divine power of the great goddess Vāk. In the *Vedas* the female principle is conceived in various aspects viz., Vāk, Aditi, Uṣas, Sarasvatī, etc. In the later Vedic literature occur the names of Ambikā, Durgā, Kātyāyanī, Durgī,⁴ etc. The *Durgā Stotras* of the *Mahābhārata*⁵ and the *Harivamśa Purāṇa*⁶ also throw light on many new aspects of the cult. Later on, all the different aspects were combined into one composite form of the Divine mother⁷ and were considered as her manifestations. The *Devī Mahatmya* section of the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*⁸ points out, at a number of places, that various aspects are the manifestations of the divine mother. It describes her as creating the Mātrikās and also absorbing them in herself,⁹ while in the "Uttara Charita"¹⁰ she is called by various names such as Raktadantikā,¹¹ Śatākṣī,¹² Śakambharī,¹³ Bhrāmari,¹⁴ Bhīmā,¹⁵ etc. The three eulogies (*stutis*) viz., *Brahmā Stuti*,¹⁶ *Śakra Stuti*¹⁷ and *Nārāyaṇī Stuti*¹⁸ refer to various names and the aspects of the nature of the goddess. Among these various manifestations, the *śaktis* of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva were the main aspects of female worship. The *Devī Mahatmya*, a work supposed to be of the Gupta period,¹⁹ synthesizes these *śaktis* and the other goddesses in the composite form of Mahiṣamardini.²⁰

Sakti Worship in Rajasthan

The archaeological and epigraphical evidences testify to the worship of Śakti in Rajasthan as being prevalent since the beginning of the Christian era. The earliest archaeological example of the goddess is found in a terracotta plaque from Nagar (Karkoṭa nagar)²¹ which has been dated between the 1st century B.C. and 1st century A.D. The terracotta plaque, now preserved at the Āmber Museum, shows the goddess uplifting the Demon in the shape of a buffalo on her knees and slaying it. This proves that the worship of the goddess was prevalent in the 1st century B. C. The examples of the same theme are also found in the archaeological excavations at Kālibangā (Gangānagar)²² and the temples at Chandrabhāgā (ca. 7th century A.D., Navadurgā temple Jhālarāpāṭan), Osia (ca. 8th-9th century A.D.), Baḍolī (ca. 9th century A. D.) and Jagat (ca. 10th century A. D.). These are sufficient proofs of the continuity of the Śakti-worship from the 1st century B. C., to the post-Gupta period in Rajasthan.

Further, the inscription of the Mālava era 480 (423-24 A.D.) records the construction of a temple of the Divine Mother full of *ḍākinīs* at Gangadhāra (Jhālarāpāṭan).²³ The temple was built by one Mayūrākṣaka for the glorification of his religious merit. The inscription also shows the traces of the beginning of *tāntric* rituals in the Śakti cult. This is suggested by the words *tantra*, *ḍākinī*, and *veśmatyugraṃ* (the terrible temple) referred to in the inscription. Besides, the inscriptions from the Dadhimatimātā temple, Nāgaur (682 V. S. = 625 A.D.),²⁴ Sakaraimātā temple, Jaipur (749 V.S. = 692 A.D.)²⁵ and that of Śilāditya (703 V. S. = 646 A.D.)²⁶ recording the construction of the temples of Durgā and Aranyavāsini at Samolī, prove the prevalence of the worship of Śakti in some form or the other in this period. Some of the Pratihāra and the Chauhāna rulers²⁷ were the worshippers of Bhagavatī. For instance, the Pratihāra rulers—Nāgabhaṭṭa II, Bhoja I, and Mahendrapāla were great devotees of the goddess.²⁸

In the contemporary literary sources, the references to the offerings of animal sacrifice to Śakti also show the extent of

Śakti-worship during the period. The *Kuvalayamāla*²⁹ (8th century A.D.), written at Jalore, describes vividly the offerings of animal sacrifices to her at the time of distress, and self-sacrifice to get a son. The other work of the same period, the *Upamitibhavaprapañchakahā*³⁰ also alludes to the temple of Chaṇḍikā, and narrates offerings of wine to the goddess, indicating the popularity of *tantric* rituals.

In the post-Gupta period the worship of Śakti began in various aspects. First, the terrific aspect in which she is associated with Mahiṣamardini, Chāmuṇḍā and Sapta Mātrikā. Secondly, the pacific aspect in which she is represented as Kṣemankarī, Sarasvatī, Lakṣmī (Gaja-Lakṣmī), Śringār-Durgā and Pārvatī doing penances. Thirdly, the benign and protective nature in which she is represented by the goddesses—Mahiṣamardini, Sarasvatī and Lakṣmī as the bestower of welfare, knowledge and wealth respectively. In this aspect, these goddesses are worshipped by all sects.

(1) The Mahisamardini Aspect

Among all the manifestations of Śakti, Mahiṣamardini is the most popular one from the point of view of worship as well as sculpture. The literary description of the theme of Mahiṣamardini has been elaborately described in the *Devī Mahātmya* and the *Devī Bhāgavata*.³¹ According to these works Mahiṣamardini was the composite form of the wraths of all the gods. She took her form from the effulgence that the gods had emitted in anger. The gods equipped her with their weapons, ornaments, jewels and a vehicle. For instance, *śaṁ śaṁ śaṁ dviniṣkriṣya dadau tasyai pinākadhrik, chakram cha dattavān kṛṣṇaḥ samutpādya svachakrataḥ* and *śankham cha varuṇaḥ, pāśam chāmbupatirdadau*.³² Similarly, Himavāna presented her the vehicle - a lion and numerous ornaments, Śiva gave her a *triśūla*, Viṣṇu a *chakra*, Varuṇa a conch and a *pāśa* (noose); Vāyu supplied her with a bow and an arrow, Indra a *vajra* and a bell; and Kālā furnished her with a glittering sword and a shield. The ocean provided her various ornaments and a garland of lotuses. Kubera offered her a cup and the Śeṣanāga a *nāgaḥara*.³³ Accordingly an image of Mahiṣamardini holds these

attributes in her additional hands. In her natural right hand she always holds a *triśala*, and in the left hand holds the demon by the tail as found in the images of the early Gupta period from Bhūmarā³⁴ and Bhīṭa.³⁵ Besides, her additional pairs of hands are shown holding a sword and a shield or other weapons like a *ghaṇṭa*, a bow, a *pāśa*, a *vajra*, a *śaṅkha*, a *chakra*, etc. Sometimes, a parrot is also shown in her sculptures to suggest the '*Līlāśuka priyā*' aspect as described in various *stotras*.³⁶ The battle of Mahiṣamardini with the generals of the army of Mahiṣāsura, and at the end with the demon himself, is also elaborately described in the *Devī Mahātmya*. The goddess attacks the Buffalo Demon, keeps one foot on it and, while twisting its tail with one hand, she pierces the *triśala* in its neck. From its half-severed neck, the Demon half-emerges in a human form and starts fighting with the goddess.

Sculptural Representation of Mahiṣamardini :—The theme of Mahiṣamardini has been depicted in various ways in sculpture. Among them the most popular ones in Northern India, and specially in Rajasthan are of three types : (i) Demon in buffalo form ; (ii) Demon coming out in a human form from the half-severed neck of the buffalo, and (iii) Demon in a human form fighting the goddess.

(i) *Demon in Buffalo form* :—In this type, the Demon is shown in the shape of a buffalo and the goddess is depicted as crushing its tail or mouth. Sometimes, the goddess is also carved standing and keeping one foot over the Demon in accordance with the description of the *Devī Mahātmya* : *Evamuktva samutpatya sa aradha taṁ mahāsuraṁ, Pādenākramya kaṇṭhe cha śalenainamataḍayat*.³⁷ This theme of Mahiṣamardini is one of the oldest modes of her representation and it continued to be followed till the 12th century A.D.³⁸ The sculptural representation of this type varies in the manner of depiction of the Demon.

(a) In some sculptures, the buffalo is shown crushed under the foot of the goddess, its eyes and tongue coming out with the agony and the pain of death. The lion is also attacking it from behind. The representative sculptures of this type are found in Rajasthan in

Nagar,³⁹ Bagherā,⁴⁰ and Rewāḍā.⁴¹ One fragmentary stone depicting the Demon in a similar fashion has been found in Jagat,⁴² which could be assigned to the post-Gupta period on the basis of style and other finds of that place.

(b) A different mode of representing the buffalo was adopted by the sculptors of Bāḍolī and Jhālāwār. In the sculpture⁴³ of the Mahiṣamardini temple at Bāḍolī, the goddess is shown standing in the *pratyālīḍha mudra*, keeping one foot with ease and grace on the Demon who is in the shape of buffalo, and the head of the buffalo is shown severed from the neck. The latter is shown crumbling down with its legs bent and no man is shown coming out of the decapitated neck. The sculpture is enshrined in the sanctum of the temple, with a profusely carved *prabhāvalī*, depicting the fight of other demons with the Mātrikās and the attendants of the Devī. On both its sides are shown two female figures (probably Mātrikās) killing the other demons which are in human form. Another sculpture from the Navadurgā temple at Chandrabhāgā (Jhālārāpāṭan)⁴⁴ depicts the dead buffalo in this manner, though it is slightly different from the image of Bāḍolī. Here the goddess is shown standing with ease (*tribhanga*) in front of the dead buffalo whose severed head is lying near her feet and its body is lying behind her. The lion is also shown in the background.

(c) In the third mode of the depiction of the battle, the goddess is shown twisting the mouth of the buffalo with one hand and with the other plunging the *triśula* in its body. U. P. Shah has discovered an example of this type from the terracottas of Kālibangā, Gānganagar (Rajasthan).⁴⁵ He has ascribed it to the early Gupta period on the basis of the style of the coiffure and carving. Contrary to this, M. Seshadri⁴⁶ claims that it belongs to the post-Gupta period because it differs from the sculptures of the Gupta period at Bhūmarā⁴⁷ and Udayagiri⁴⁸ in the mode of the attack by the goddess. This view is not tenable in comparison to that of Shah because of the following reasons.

Generally, the reliefs of the Gupta period show the goddess keeping one foot on the neck of the buffalo and uplifting it by the tail. It is not possible to decide the date of any sculpture

only on the basis of the manner of depiction. For instance, the earliest form⁴⁹ of depicting the goddess as crushing the buffalo under her foot continued till the 12th century A.D. Secondly, the terracotta plaque from Kālibangā representing the goddess as twisting the neck of the buffalo and lifting it by the mouth has also been found from a very early period. The terracotta plaque from Nagar (Karkotānagar, Jaipur)⁵⁰ of the 1st century B.C., itself shows the goddess lifting the buffalo from its mouth. Hence, U. P. Shah seems to be correct in considering the sculpture from Kālibangā of the early Gupta period on the basis of the hair-style, jewellery, etc.

An example of the continuity of the tradition of carving this form of the goddess is found in the post-Gupta temples of Rajasthan specially in the regions of Udaipur and Jhālāwār. In the Udaipur region, the sculpture from Jhādol shows the goddess crushing the buffalo with one foot and holding its mouth to break the neck. This sculpture can be assigned to the 8th century A.D.⁵¹ From this region, other sculptures could be cited from the Ambikā temple at Jagat (10th Century A.D.),⁵² which represent different aspects of Mahiṣamardini and the other goddesses. In the two sculptures of this temple,⁵³ the goddess is shown twisting the mouth of the buffalo instead of lifting it by the tail or hind legs. With one hand she is twisting its mouth and with the other piercing the *triśula* into its body ; her other two hands are holding a sword and a *ghaṇṭā*.

Another example of this type is now preserved in the Jhālāwār Museum.⁵⁴ The goddess is shown attacking the buffalo with a *triśula* but its human form is absent. That the region of Jhālāwār was the seat of the Śakti cult is proved by the numerous sculptures of the goddesses found there.

(ii) *Demon in human form* :—The second type of images represent that part of the description of the *Devī Mahātmya*,⁵⁵ in which the demon half-emerges out of the decapitated neck of the buffalo. According to this work, the goddess jumped on the Buffalo Demon, struck it down with a spear and trampled it under

her foot. From its neck, the Asura half-issued forth in human form and continued to fight until the goddess severed his head with her sword.

The earliest and the magnificent sculptural representation of this type is found in the temple of Harṣatmātā at Ābānerī (8th century A.D.). This sculpture is at present preserved in the Āmber Museum.⁵⁶ Here, the goddess is represented with four hands. With the right hand she is piercing the *triśula* into the body of the buffalo and with her left hand she is crushing the half emerging Demon from the severed neck of the buffalo. Her face shows complete serenity and ease with which she is slaying the Demon. The coiffure of the goddess and her ornaments and the style of the sculpture confirm the Gupta influence.

Another sculpture⁵⁷ from the same temple depicts, in addition to the scene of the combat between the army of the Demon and the goddesses a similar theme of fight. The theme is carved on a long panel which is divided by pillars in three parts. In the centre of the panel the goddess is shown killing the Demon who is emerging out of the severed neck of the buffalo. The other two parts of the panel depict the battle scene. The sculptures from Osia representing this type of Mahiṣamardini are characterised by her vigorous movement in killing the Demon. The sculptures from one of the principal niches of the Sun temple at Osia⁵⁸ portrays her with ten hands. In the style of its carving and ornaments, it is closer to the image of Mahiṣamardini of the Harṣatmātā temple.

Another important sculpture from Osia, now preserved in the Maṇḍor Museum, was carved in an arch of the *śikhara* of the temple. Unfortunately, the sculpture has been withered away by the effect of weather, still the vigorous movement of the goddess ; and the effort of all her hands to overcome the Asura is clearly visible. She is attacking the Demon with the *triśula*, her hand holding the sword is also in the posture of attack ; with one left hand she is crushing the demon on the shoulder, and with the other she is holding some weapon which is not recognizable.

The representation of Mahiṣamardini in this manner was very popular in the sculptures from Jhālāwār,⁵⁹ Sikar⁶⁰ and Jodhpur between the 8th and 9th centuries. This tradition remained in vogue for a considerable time as is evident from the sculptures from the Ambikā temple⁶¹ of the 10th century A.D., which confirm the continuity of this tradition. So also do the paintings from Bundi (Rajasthan) and Kulu (Pahāḍī) of the 18th century A.D., which depict the Demon emerging from the half-severed neck of the buffalo and the Devī leaping on the back of Mahiṣa.⁶²

(iii) *Demon in human form* :—The third type of representation of the Mahiṣamardini aspect was to depict the demon in full human form fighting with the goddess. This form of Mahiṣāsura has been referred to in the *Devī Mahātmya*.⁶³ When the goddess tried to catch the buffalo with her *paśa*, it gave up its buffalo form and adopted the form of a lion. When the goddess cut off the head of the lion, it assumed the human form holding a sword and a shield. In this type of sculpture, the Demon is represented in the human form fighting the goddess.

Though rare, sculptural examples of this type are found in the Ambikā temple⁶⁴ at Jagat. Here, the buffalo form of the Asura is completely missing. In one sculpture, the goddess is crushing the Asura, keeping her foot on his back and piercing into him the *triśula* with two hands ; in another sculpture from the same temple, the Asura is carved in a standing posture, attacking the goddess with a sword, while his other hand is held by the goddess. Examples of this form are also found in other parts of India. For instance, it is represented in an image from Kāñchīpuram, now preserved in the National Museum, New Delhi.⁶⁵

In the Mahiṣamardini aspect of the goddess, there are two more types of sculptural representations which are, of course, not found in Rajasthan. The one in which the goddess is standing on the severed head of the buffalo was popular in South India during the Pallava and the Chola periods (7th to 11th century A.D.) ; its examples are found at Māmallapuram, Madras, Tanjore, Mysore, etc. Another type also prevalent in South India depicted the

demon in human form with buffalo horns, sculptural representation of which are found at Ellora and Paṭṭadakal.⁶⁶

Seshadri has elaborately illustrated all these types of sculptures of the Mahiṣamardini aspects except those which depict the demon in full human form or only in buffalo form whose head has been severed. These types were confined only to Rajasthan and could be considered as a contribution to the iconography of Mahiṣamardini.

Various names of Mahiṣamardini :—Many of the iconographical texts give details and point out characteristic features of some types of the fight of Mahiṣamardini with Mahiṣāsura, but they do not agree on her nomenclature and have named her differently. In the *Devī Mahatmya*, she is known as Chaṇḍikā⁶⁷ Ambikā⁶⁸ and Bhadrakālī⁶⁹. The *Āmanāya*,⁷⁰ a text from South India describes her as standing on the head of the Mahiṣa under the name Vanadurgā. The manuscript attached to the *Śilpa Ratna*,⁷¹ the *Mayadīpikā*,⁷² and the *Rūpamaṇḍana*⁷³ describe her as Kātyāyanī. These texts have illustrated the half-emerging demon from the buffalo's severed head. A similar type of representation is also given in the *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* where she is named Chaṇḍikā.⁷⁴ Kaśyapa, while commenting on the *Bṛihat Samhita*, explains Chaṇḍikā as Mahiṣamardini : *Chaṇḍikaṣṭadaśabhuja sarvaprakāraṇvita, Tryakṣa simharata dhanyā mahiṣāsurasudini*.⁷⁵ Gopinatha Rao uses the name Kātyāyanī for the sculptures of Mahiṣamardini from Māmallapuram and Ellora in which the demon is shown in anthropomorphic form, having the face of a buffalo with a human body. The name Durgā is also used for such images.

Transformation of Mahiṣamardini into Sachchikā :—The worship of the goddess Mahiṣamardini continued till the later mediaeval period. Even the Jains were devotees of the divine mother, but worshipped her as Sachchikā at the famous temple of Sachiyāmātā at Osia (Jodhpur) which was originally dedicated to Mahiṣamardini. The *Paṭṭavālī* of the *Upakeśagachchha*⁷⁶ mentions the conversion of the Hindus to Jainism at Osia ; and as a corollary to this, the name of the popular Hindu goddess Mahiṣamardini was

also changed to Sachchikā. Moreover, it is proved by the inscribed image of Mahiṣamardini which is *in situ* in the back principal niche of the sanctum of the Sachiyāmātā temple. The inscription of V. S. 1234 which is near the image, records the installation of the images of Chaṇḍikā, Śitalā, Sachchikā, Kṣemankarī and Kṣetrapāla in this temple.

The argument is also strengthened by the discovery of an inscribed image of Mahiṣamardini from Rewāḍā (V. S. 1237).⁷⁷ In the inscription she is named as Sachchikā. It states that in V. S. 1237 in the month of Falguna 2, on Tuesday, this image of goddess Sachchikā was installed by a *gaṇinī* of Upakeśagachchha. The image represents the Asura in animal form crushed under the foot of the goddess. The upper part of the image is damaged. Even then, it is sufficient to prove that the deity is Mahiṣamardini, as the lion is also shown catching the tail of the demon. This shows the transformation of the goddess Mahiṣamardini into Sachchikā in Rajasthan.

This transformation was not confined only to Rajasthan. The *Upadeśamālā Laghu Vritti*, a Jaina manuscript, copied in V. S. 1352 (1295 A.D.) from the Jaina Bhaṇḍāra at Cambay also illustrates a painting of ten-armed Mahiṣamardini.⁷⁸ In this miniature, the Asura is shown emerging from the buffalo's severed neck. The goddess is holding the head of the Asura by the hair and killing the buffalo with the spear. This shows the amalgamation of the goddess in the Jaina religion. The Jaina religion believed in the principle of *ahimsā*, but worship of the goddess was taken into its fold because of the popularity and continuity of the influence of the Śakti cult on the converts to Jainism.

(2) Sapta Matrika Aspect

The worship of mothers along with Ambikā has been prevalent since the very early times. In the *Rigveda*, there is a reference to Sapta Mātrikās of Agni,⁷⁹ and another hymn states that the Sapta Mātrikās regulate the preparation of Soma juice.⁸⁰ In the *Mahābhārata* there is no clear reference to the Sapta Mātrikās though various names of Devī occur in the *stotras*.⁸¹

The idea of Mātrikās was rooted in the Vedic literature, but its Paurāṇic formulation in the form of seven mothers - Brahmāṇī, Māheśvari, Kaumārī, Vaiṣṇavī, Vārāhī, Aindrī and Chāmuṇḍā took shape in the Kuṣāṇa period, as is suggested by V. S. Agrawala. He also suggests that the earliest representation of Mātrikās in sculpture started from the Kuṣāṇa period.⁸² The sculptures of this period depicting mother-goddesses are now preserved in the Mathura museum.

The names and number of Mātrikās vary in different texts from seven to sixteen.⁸³ They are generally seven, but sometimes eight or nine are mentioned and represented in sculpture. In Rajasthan, the inscription of 423 A. D., from Gangadhāra (Jhalāwār) refers only to the construction of a temple of Mātrikās but it does not indicate the number in which they were installed in this temple : *Matrīnāṇcha pramuditaghaṇātyarthanirhradinīnām... gatamidam dākinīsamprakīrṇam, Veśmātyugraṇ nripatisachivoakā-rayat punyahetoḥ*.⁸⁴ Varāha Mihira (5th century A.D.) does not specify the number of Mātrikās, but he states their iconography : *Matrigaṇah kartavyaḥ svanāmadevānurūpakritachinhah*.⁸⁵ According to him the main characteristic of a Mātrikā is that she should be equipped with weapons and the *vahana* of the god whose name she bears. In the *Kumārasambhavam*,⁸⁶ Kālidāsa also refers to the Mātrikās while describing the toilet of the bridegroom Śiva at the time of the marriage celebrations.

It is for the first time in the *Devī Mahātmya*⁸⁷ that origin, number and names of the Mātrikās are mentioned, though with variations. The purpose of their origin was to help the goddess Chāṇḍikā in the battle with the demons. Chapter VIII of the *Devī Mahātmya*⁸⁸ mentions the name of seven Mātrikās - Brahmāṇī, Māheśvari, Kaumārī, Vaiṣṇavī, Vārāhī, Nārasimhī and Aindrī. In chapter IX, Śivadūtī and Chāmuṇḍā are, again, added to this group of Mātrikās.⁸⁹ From the varying characteristics of these Mātrikās it could possibly be inferred that every god was represented by a Śakti. In this context, the references to Āgneyī, Vaināyikī, Yamī, Vāruṇī and Kauberī in Ūtpala's commentary on the *Bṛihat Samhita* suggest that there was no fixed number of Mātrikās. The varying

sculptural representations of the Mātrikās as those of Brahmāṇī, Maheśvarī, Kaumārī, Vaiṣṇavī, Vārāhī, Nārasimhī, Aindrī, Chāmuṇḍā, Vaināyakī and Āgneyī also suggest that their number was not fixed.

Generally, when the Mātrikās are represented in a group, they are seven or eight in number. But when represented independently or in a *yoginī* temple,⁹⁰ the number is not fixed. Every deity could be represented by his female energy. Among these mother-goddesses the sculptural representation of Nārasimhī, Vaināyakī or Gaṇeśānī, Vāruṇī, Āgneyī and Yamī is very rare.

The temples of Mātrikās were built in the period under study. Bāṇabhaṭṭa refers to a ruined temple of the Mātrikās : *jīrṇa mātrigrihasyottareṇa* in the *Harṣacharita*.⁹¹ These temples were called *mātrigriha* or *mātriveśma*.⁹² Sometimes the marriage rites also took place in these temples.

Sculptural representation :—The worship of Mātrikās in Rajasthan is also corroborated by archaeological data. A number of the Mātrikā images discovered at Maṇḍor, Osia, Phalodī, Dungarpur, Udaipur, Bagherā, etc., bear testimony to this fact. The earliest images of the Aṣṭa Mātrikās at Maṇḍor carved on a single rock, can be dated as V. S. 732 (685 A.D.).⁹³ On the basis of this date given on the inscription which mentions the construction of a step-well there. Here the Mātrikās are carved with Gaṇeśa on their left.

The mother-goddesses are often carved in a group on a frieze. In the panels, the Mātrikās are represented standing, in dancing postures or seated, sometimes, with a child on the lap. Their characteristic vehicles are carved near their feet. They are represented in the company of Vīrabhadra or Śiva and Gaṇeśa who are carved on either side of the panel. In the order of their representation first comes Vīrabhadra or Śiva, then follow Brahmāṇī, Maheśvarī, Kaumārī, Vaiṣṇavī, Vārāhī, Indrāṇī, Kālī and Gaṇeśa. They are often carved on the lintel and door jambs of the doorways of the temples along with the Navagrahas. Similarly, in Rajasthan

in the temples at Jagat, Nāgdā, Harṣanātha (Sikar) and Baḍolī, they are carved on the door jambs, pillars and lintels.⁹⁴ In these panels, they are always represented in a similar fashion.

Brahmānī :—The main characteristic of *Brahmānī* is that she holds an *akṣasūtra*, a *kamaṇḍalu* and a *sruva* and keeps a swan as her vehicle: *Brahmānī brahmasadriṣī hamsādhiraḍḍhā karitavyā* and *Hamsayuktavimānagre sākṣasūtrakamaṇḍaluḥ*.⁹⁵ The image of *Brahmānī* preserved at the Rajputana Museum⁹⁶ is represented with a child. However, in this image the posture of the hands and the expression on her face lack liveliness and the softness of a mother.

Maheśvarī :—*Māheśvarī* is described in the *Devī Mahatmya* as adorned with a *chandralekhā*, wearing bracelets and other ornaments of snakes, holding a *triśūla* and riding on a bull: *vriṣāraḍḍhā triśulavaradhāriṇī, Mahāhivalayā prāptā chandrarekhā-vibhūṣaṇa*.⁹⁷

Kaumārī :—*Kaumārī*, the *śakti* of *Kārttikeya*, was carved as holding a *śakti* and riding a peacock. Sometimes a cock is also represented with *Kaumārī*. The *Devī Mahatmya* prescribes both a peacock and a cock for the *śakti* of *Kumāra*: *Mayaravahana . . . guhartūpiṇī . . . mayarakukkuṭāvrite*.⁹⁸ In the post-Gupta period the cock was replaced by the peacock in the images of *Kārttikeya*; but this change did not occur completely in the images of *Kaumārī*. For instance, in some images, *Kaumārī* continued to be depicted both with a cock and a peacock; the cock in her hand and the peacock as her vehicle as is evidenced by the image of *Kaumārī* from Malagāon (Sirohi).⁹⁹

Vaiṣṇavī :—*Vaiṣṇavī*, the *śakti* of *Viṣṇu*, is represented as seated over *Garuḍa* and holding a *śankha*, a *chakra*, a *gada*, the *Śāranga* bow and a sword.¹⁰⁰ The *Chakreśvari yakṣiṇī* of the Jaina pantheon is very similar to *Vaiṣṇavī*. The sculptural examples of *Vaiṣṇavī* along with the other *Mātrikās* are found from the temples at Amjhārā (Dungarpur)¹⁰¹ and Baḍī-Kalāmaṇḍī (Jhalāwār).¹⁰²

Varahī :—The *Śakti* of *Varāha* was called *Vārāhī*. She too is represented with a face of a boar like the *Varāha* incarnation

of Viṣṇu. The *Devī Mahātmya* prescribes that she should be represented as wielding a *mahāchakra* and lifting the earth goddess on her tusk : *Grihīto gramahāchakredanṣṭroddhrita vasundhare*.¹⁰³ This form of Vārāhī is not represented in sculpture. In her images, she is carved only with a face of a boar and with the weapons of Viṣṇu. Sometimes a fish is also carved among the attributes of Vārāhī which indicates the influence of *tantra*.¹⁰⁴ In Rajasthan, the image of Vārāhī from the temple at Ābānerī (ca. 10th century A.D.) holds fish in her hand and stands in front of a buffalo.¹⁰⁵ An image of Vārāhī, now kept in the British Museum, also shows her holding a fish.¹⁰⁶

Being a counterpart of Varāha, Vārāhī is supposed to have some *vāhana* for herself but as none of the iconographical texts prescribes any *vāhana* for her, she is generally represented without it in sculpture. However, in exception to this, a buffalo or a boar is represented as her vehicle in few stray images. The image of Vārāhī discovered from Amjhārā (Dungarpur, Rajasthan) represents a boar as her vehicle.¹⁰⁷ An image of Vārāhī from Malāgaon (Sirohi) shows her seated on a buffalo, holding a child, and wielding a conch-shell, a *gādā*, and a *chakra*. Sometimes, like Chāmūṇḍā, she is also shown seated, or standing on a human corpse.¹⁰⁸ An image of Vārāhī from the Ābu region presents this characteristic.

Nārasimhī :—The Śakti of Narasimha is called Nārasimhī : *Nārasimhī nrisimhasya bibhratī sadriṣam vapuḥ*.¹⁰⁹ She is rarely represented in sculpture either independently or in a group. In the group panels usually Nārasimhī is excluded and only Vaiṣṇavī and Vārāhī are represented.

Aindrī :—Aindrī, the Śakti of Indra too, is rarely carved separately. However, it is only in the group of Sapta-Mātrikās that she is represented seated on an elephant with the attributes of Indra : *Vajrahastā tathāivaindrī gajarājopari sthita, Prāptā sahasranayanā yathā śakrastathaiva sā*.¹¹⁰ Aindrī with thousand eyes is seldom represented in sculpture. A rare image of Aindrī representing the eye-marks on the body and forehead is preserved in the Bhārat Kālā Bhavan, Varanasi.¹¹¹

Chāmunda :—Among all the emanations of Ambikā two became very popular in the sculptures of the post-Gupta period. One was the Mahiṣamardini Durgā and the other Chāmunda. Chāmunda was also known as Kālī or Kālikā. She is said to have emanated from the forehead of Ambikā for killing Chaṇḍa and Muṇḍa. After slaying them she was given the name of Chāmunda.¹¹² According to the *Devī Mahātmya* she also helped the goddess Ambikā and other mother goddesses in killing the Asura, Raktabīja. As every drop of blood of this Asura created a new one, she could prevent the creation of the Asuras by drinking its blood and stopping it from felling on the ground.¹¹³ The *Devī Mahātmya* suggests that Chāmunda should be carved with a terrible countenance and an emaciated body, holding a sword, a noose and a skull-topped staff (Khaṭvāṅga), wearing a garland of skulls and clad in a tiger's skin.¹¹⁴

In sculpture, Chāmunda is represented with her bones and veins showing through the skin, a ghastly expression, and a sunken belly with a scorpion mark on it. Besides, she is also depicted with a fish in the *pānapātra* held in her hand.

These symbols indicate some *tāntric* influence. In her images from the Nava-Durgā temple at Chandrabhāgā (Jhālārāpātan) and Ghāṭeśvara temple at Baḍolī (Kota), she is also shown dancing on a human corpse. The image from the Nava-Durgā temple at Chandrabhāgā (Jhālārāpātan) depicts her as dancing on a prostrate man, who is raising his head to see her dance. She is wearing a garland of skulls. She is twelve-armed ; one of her hand is holding a human head probably that of Chaṇḍa. The hands are carved in *uromaṇḍala*. The face and the legs of the image are broken.

Another dancing Chāmunda is carved in the temple at Baḍolī. Here the lower part of the image is broken. However, a human body is visible under her feet. She is wearing a garland of skulls and the *mukuta* is also decorated with skulls.¹¹⁵ On the whole, the image conveys the sentiments of fear and anger. In Rajasthan, it seems to be a common feature to show the images

of Chāmunda with a terrific look. Showing this aspect, her image from Chandrāvati (Sirohi) is represented as holding a cup with a fish in it.¹¹⁶

The images of Chāmunda from Jhālāwār, the ancient seat of Śakti worship represent some of her special features, which are mainly based on the theme of the *Devī Mahātmya*. For instance, her image (ca. 800 A.D.)¹¹⁷ is shown holding Śiva and Brahmā in her hands, and with two additional hands she is shown supporting the Navagraha panel above her head. Another image from a village known as Śilā Devī, Pātan (Jhālāwār) shows the goddess Āmbikā¹¹⁸ killing the demon, Raktabīja, and is depicted as drinking the blood collected in her *panapātra*. The whole of this narrative has been represented in this relief. The goddess is depicted as having killed one Asura and holding him on her *triśala*, while another Asura is shown coming up from the drop of his blood, and attacking her. With her *kapāla*, she is shown collecting the blood and drinking it so as not to let it fall on the ground.

Vaināyaki :—Vaināyaki, Vāyavi and Āgneyi are the counterparts of Gaṇeśa, Vāyu and Agni respectively. They are rarely represented in the sculpture of this period. Among them the images of Vāyavi and Āgneyi are discovered from Amjhāra,¹¹⁹ and they are now preserved in the Dungarpur Museum.

The earliest depiction of the elephant headed female goddess occurs on a plaque from Rairh. It is assignable to 1st century B.C., to 1st century A.D.¹²⁰ P. K. Agrawal has cited a number of examples from various Purāṇas of animal headed goddesses who were folk deities and believes that these might have served as the prototype to the figure of Vaināyaki the śakti of Gaṇeśa.¹²¹

Vaināyaki is seldom carved in stone. Among the literary sources like the *Skanda Purāṇa* and the *Matsya Purāṇa*¹²² she is alluded to as Gajānanā and Vaināyaki respectively. With the popularity of Gaṇeśa as a major deity, the Mātrikā form of Gaṇeśānī or Vaināyaki also began to be conceived and subsequently gained importance.¹²³ As a result, this goddess was independently

worshipped and also included in the group of Yoginīs as is proved by the discovery of the images of Gaṇeśānī from Suhānia (Gwalior Museum), Harṣanātha (Sikar)¹²⁴ and the Chaunsaṭha Yoginī temple at Bherāghāt.¹²⁵ From the literary and sculptural evidences, it could be inferred that the worship of the elephant-faced image of the Mātrikā had become popular during the post-Gupta period in Northern India¹²⁶ and it continued to be so during the mediaeval period too.¹²⁷

The worship of the Mātrikās like that of Mahiṣamardini was also popular in Jainism. They are narrated in the Jaina literature and are also found in the Jaina temples along with the other Jaina deities. In the *Ṣaṣṭhīsaṃskāra Vidhi*,¹²⁸ Āchāradinakara invokes eight Mātrikās. They are viz., Brahmānī, Maheśvarī, Kaumārī, Vaiṣṇavī, Vārāhī, Chāmuṇḍā and Tripurā. In Rajasthan, in the temples at Dilwārā (Mount Ābu), the images of the Mātrikās are carved separately showing their independent status and not as attendants to the Tīrthankaras. This is also proved by the presence of the image of Gaṇeśa behind them.

(3) Other Goddesses

Among the other aspects of the female energy, Lakṣmī, Sarasvatī, Kṣemankarī and Gaurī were some of the popular representations of this period. The study of literary and archaeological sources makes it clear that like the Mātrikās, the goddesses, Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī, were also worshipped by all the sects – Buddhists, Jains and Hindus. This could be ascribed to the feeling of tolerance and compromise between these religions.¹²⁹ In this manner, the acceptance of the Hindu deities, their attributes and vehicles by the Buddhists and the Jains was the result of the deep-rooted concepts of Hindu divinities in them. A number of examples could be cited to substantiate this sort of intercommunication between Brahmanism and Jainism. For instance, the Brahmanic gods and goddesses are transformed as *yakṣas* and *yakṣiṇīs* and are made to attend upon the Tīrthankaras.¹³⁰ The iconography of these attendants of the twenty four Tīrthankaras as given in the Jaina texts and the sculptures, prove that they have

been taken from the Hindu pantheon. They look like exact copies of the Brahmanical deities. Amongst them Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī are the most important goddesses. They were worshipped by all the sects.

Lakṣmī :—Lakṣmī is regarded as the goddess of wealth and prosperity. Among the Brahmanical deities, she holds an independent position like the mother goddesses. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*¹³¹ describes the origin of Lakṣmī among the fourteen jewels, that were found on the churning of ocean by the Asuras and the Devas. Lakṣmī came to the surface of the ocean seated on a lotus, lustrated by the elephants with the waters of the Gangā and the Yamunā. This aspect of Lakṣmī is known as Gajalakṣmī in sculpture.

This particular motif of Gajalakṣmī goes back to the Gupta period and occurs on the sealings from Bhīṭa¹³² and Basārḥ.¹³³ The *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* describes her image as holding a nectar-pot, a lotus, a *bilva* and a *śankha*.¹³⁴ Behind her, a pair of elephants are shown pouring down pots of water on her head. These two elephants are the symbols of *śankha* and *padma nidhi* : *Hastidvayam vijānīhi śankha-padmaṇubhau nidhi*.¹³⁵

The images of Gajalakṣmī were very often carved in the post-Gupta temples of Rajasthan as could be gathered from their discovery in the temples at Parānagar (Alwar),¹³⁶ Osia (Jodhpur),¹³⁷ Ābānerī (Jaipur)¹³⁸ and Jhālarāpātan.¹³⁹ In these images, sometimes, below the lotus seat of Lakṣmī two lions are carved as supporting the lotus from the two sides. This was probably to suggest the affinity of Lakṣmī with Simhavāhinī Durgā. The images of Lakṣmī at the Piplāmātā temple, Osia and Harṣatmātā temple, Ābānerī¹⁴⁰ depict this feature. In the sculpture from Ābānerī, Gajalakṣmī is represented seated on the lotus supported by two lions in the company of Gaṇeśa and Kubera. The Piplāmātā temple at Osia also preserves one such sculpture where goddess Chāṇḍikā is represented along with Gaṇeśa and Kubera. The association of Gaṇeśa and Kubera with Lakṣmī is also emphasized in the inscription from the temple of Sakaraimātā (Near Jaipur).¹⁴¹ The

initial portion of the inscription invokes the blessings of Gaṇapati, Chaṇḍikā and Dhanada Yakṣa (Kubera). The association of Śrī, the goddess of prosperity with Kubera, the god of riches is also emphasized in the *Mahābhārata*¹⁴² where the former is mentioned as attending the court of the later with Nalakubera. The inscription also describes Kubera associated with Lakṣmī.

It is interesting to note that the image of Gajalakṣmī was worshipped by the Buddhists and the Jains as the goddess of prosperity. Numerous images of Gajalakṣmī seated on the lotus and anointed by elephants are carved on the gateway architraves of Sānci, Bodhgayā and Bhārhut. These images led Marshall and other scholars¹⁴³ to mistake them for the scenes of the 'Nativity of Buddha'. Coomaraswamy has correctly identified these sculptures of Gajalakṣmī or Śrīdevī as the goddess of prosperity. He is of the opinion that the language of symbols in art does not develop in isolation within one sect. It is the same in the art of every sect. Therefore, the symbolic representation of the goddess of prosperity was similar in all the sects and was in conformity with the traditions of the Vedic period. In view of this, Coomaraswamy has identified Gajalakṣmī with Śrī Devī of the *Śrī Sakta* of the *Rigveda* as well as with the Buddhist goddess – Sirimā Devatā depicted on the railings of Bhārhut as Śrīlakṣmī.¹⁴⁴

References to the images of Gajalakṣmī are also found in the Jaina literature and art where she is represented as Śrīdevī. The Jaina *Kalpasūtra*¹⁴⁵ while describing the fourteen dreams refers to Śrīdevī wearing a garland of gold coins (Dīnāra Mālā). The Mother of Mahāvīra saw in her dream a goddess Padmā seated on a lotus and lustrated by elephants.¹⁴⁶ The earliest sculptural representation of Śrī Devī in the Jaina Art is found on the pediment of a relief on the doorway of the Ananta Gumphā at the Bārābara Hills (Bihar) datable to ca. 150 B.C. – 50 B.C.¹⁴⁷ This motif has also been found in the caves of Udayagiri – Khaṇḍagiri in Orissa, which was an important centre of Jainism.¹⁴⁸

The Jaina image of Śrī Devī, the Yakṣiṇī, looks a replica of the Śrīlakṣmī of Hindu pantheon. Her attributes are a *chakra*,

a *gada*, a *śankha* and a *padma*.¹⁴⁹ The manuscript – *Upadeśamāla Laghu Vritti*¹⁵⁰ of V. S. 1291 from Cambay, describes the Jaina Lakṣmī as a goddess seated on a lotus holding an *akṣamāla* and a pot of nectar in her hands, while her two additional upper-hands support the two lotus stalks on which two elephants are shown standing and anointing the goddess. This shows that both the Lakṣmī and Gajalakṣmī aspects were worshipped by the Jains and the Buddhists.

Sarasvatī :—Another example of the interaction between Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism is the image of *Sarasvatī*. The origin of this goddess could be traced from the *Rigvedic* River goddess *Sarasvatī*,¹⁵¹ who was also eulogized as the goddess of learning, full of truth, impeller of true and sweet speech, awakener of happy and noble thoughts, and illuminer of entire understanding : *Chodayitrī sūnritīnām chetantī sumatīnām* and *Dhīyo Viśva virājati*.¹⁵² In fact, in the *Vedas* these two aspects of *Sarasvatī*—(i) the River goddess ; and (ii) the goddess of learning and knowledge – are inseparable for the reason that the banks of this river were occupied by the Rṣis, who sang the Vedic hymns and offered sacrifices there.

In the course of time when the physical form of the river *Sarasvatī* disappeared, her *Nadī-devatā* aspect was forgotten and she was given prominence in sculpture and worshipped only as *Vāg-devatā*. In the the Paurāṇic period she was regarded as the consort of *Brahmā* : *Ājyasthālīm nyaset pārśve vedāṁścha chaturah punaḥ Vāmaparśveasya sāvitṛīm dakṣiṇe cha sarasvatīm*.¹⁵³ She was sometimes, associated with *Viṣṇu*,¹⁵⁴ but her independent status as a goddess of learning and knowledge became popular through art and literature. In the *Purāṇas* she is described as playing on the *vīṇā* and holding a manuscript : *Pustakakṣamālikāhastā vīṇā hastā Sarasvatī*.¹⁵⁵ Both of these attributes symbolise her proficiency in fine arts and knowledge. The *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* also points out these aspects of the goddess : *Vedāstasya bhuja jñeya sarvaśāstrāṇi pustakam*.¹⁵⁶ The iconographic texts from the South and North of India stress this very aspect of the goddess by attributing to her a manuscript, *vyākhyāna mudrā*,¹⁵⁷ and a *vīṇā*

along with an *akṣamālā*, a *kamaṇḍalu*, a lotus, and other objects associated with Brahmā. Among her attributes, the *Rupamaṇḍana*¹⁵⁸ emphasizes an *akṣamālā*, a lotus and a *pustaka* while the *Aṁśumadbhedāgama*¹⁵⁹ and the *Pūrvakāraṇāgama*¹⁶⁰ describe her as sitting on a white lotus, wearing a *jaṭāmukuta*, *yajñopavīta* and other ornaments, holding a book, a lotus, an *akṣasatra* and *vyākhyāna mudra*. Bāṇabhaṭṭa portrays her as waving a fly-whisk over Brahmā, wearing anklets and other ornaments, a *yajñopavīta* and white silken robe : *Grihīta cāmaraprachaladbhujalatāpitamahamupavījayantī nūpurayugaleṇa vāchālita charaṇayugala... anśavalambina brahmasūtreṇa pavitrīkritakāyā sakṣmavimalena... anśukenāchchhādita śarīra*.¹⁶¹

In sculpture she is often carved as an independent deity, sitting on a lotus seat, holding invariably a *viṇā*, a manuscript, a *kamaṇḍalu*, and an *akṣamālā*. In Rajasthan, her images from the Lakulīśa temple (Ekalingaji, Udaipur) and the Ambikā temple (Jagat, Udaipur) could be cited as the representative example of the period. Similar to the description of the *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, the image from the Lakulīśa temple represents her as seated on a lotus seat, holding a *viṇā*, a manuscript, an *akṣamālā* and a nectar-pot. In the Ambikā temple, she is carved holding a *viṇā* in one hand along with other objects. Sometimes a small figure of a swan is carved under her seat of lotus to show her association with Brahmā.

Buddhism and Jainism have also borrowed the goddess Sarasvatī from the Hindu pantheon. The Buddhist representation of the goddess does not differ from the Brahmanical representation. With the introduction of *tantra*, Buddhism modified her form in various ways. She was classified as Vajravīṇā Sarasvatī, Mahāsarasvatī, Vajra Śārada, Āryā Sarasvatī and Vajra Sarasvatī.¹⁶² As this religion was not prevalent in Rajasthan in this period, sculptural representation of Buddhist Sarasvatī has not been found here.

Some of the Jaina divinities like the guardian deities of Tīrthankaras look similar to the Hindu deities. Besides these, there are sixteen Śruta-devatās or Vidyādevīs in the Jaina pantheon

whose presiding deity is Sarasvatī. The earliest sculptural representation of the goddess in Jainism dates back to V. S. 54 (3 B. C.) found in Mathura.¹⁶³ A large number of her images are also found in the strongholds of Jainism such as Bharatpur, Ābu, Raṇakapur, Pallū, Vasantagarh, etc.

Other important aspects of the goddess Sarasvatī prevalent in Rajasthan were – Kṣemankarī or Godhāsana Gaurī and Vāṭayakṣiṇī. Among these the sculptural examples of Kṣemankarī and Gaurī are found in abundance there. The image of Kṣemankarī enshrined in the Ambikā temple, Jagat¹⁶⁴ and a colossal image of Gaurī doing penance in the temple of Harṣanātha, Sikar¹⁶⁵ could be cited as examples of the prevalence of their worship in this period.

Unfortunately, the temple of Vāṭayakṣiṇī Devī at Ghontavārṣika (Pratapgarh, Rajasthan) does not exist now but from the epigraphic record of Mahendrapala II,¹⁶⁶ it could be inferred that her image was worshipped there. One of the benedictory verses of this inscription refers to the Mahiṣamardini aspect of the goddess.¹⁶⁷ From this it could be concluded that Vāṭayakṣiṇī was most probably another local name given to the goddess Mahiṣamardini. These regional goddesses were not as popular as Mahiṣamardini, Sapta-Mātrikā, Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī with the sculptors. This could be ascribed to their not enjoying an independent status like the latter ones.

References

1. J. Marshall, *Mohenjodaro and the Indus Civilization*, Reprint edn., 1973, pp. 49-52, pls. XII, XCIV, XCV and XC.
2. E. Mackay, *Early Indus Civilizations*, 2nd edn., Luzac and Co., London, 1948, p. 54.
3. *Rigveda*, X, 125. The hymn is addressed to Vāk, the goddess of speech.
4. *Vājasneyī Saṁhitā*, III, 57, "Eṣa te Rudrā bhāgaḥ saha svasrā ambikayā"; *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa*, I, 6, 10, 4-5. These two texts describe Ambikā as the sister of Rudra. In the *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*, Rudra has been described as *Ambikāpati*. Cf. *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*, X, 1, 18.

5. *MBH*, Virāṭaparva, ch. 6 ; *MBH*, Bhīṣma Parva, ch. 23.
6. *Harivaṁśa Purāṇa*, Viṣṇu Parva, ch. III.
7. Banerjea *Pauranic and Tantric Religion*, pp. 114-118.
8. *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, chs. 81-93. Chapters 81 to 93 of this *Purāṇa* are known as *Devī Mahātmya*.
9. V. S. Agrawala, ed., *Devī Mahātmya — The Glorification of the Great Goddess*, All India Kashiraja Trust, Ramnagar, Varanasi, 1963 (hereafter abbreviated as *Devī Mahātmya*, ch. VII, vs. 4-5 ; ch. XI, vs. 1-28. ch. X, vs. 3-4.
10. *Ibid.*, ch. XI, vs. 38-51.
11. *Ibid.*, ch. XI, vs. 41-42.
12. *Ibid.*, vs. 44.
13. *Ibid.*, ch. IX, vs. 45.
14. *Ibid.*, vs. 49-50.
15. *Ibid.*, vs. 47-48.
16. *Ibid.*, ch. I, vs. 54-67.
17. *Ibid.*, ch. IV.
18. *Ibid.*, ch. XI.
19. This is proved on the basis of epigraphical and other evidences. For details see, V. S. Agrawala, *Devī Mahātmya*, preface, pp. ix-x ; See also, Pargiter, *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, Introduction, p. xiv. Bhandarkar states that a verse of *Devī Mahātmya* quoted in the inscription of Dadhimatimātā (Rajasthan) of 608 A.D., suggests that the work seems to be of much earlier period as it could gain such popularity by this time. Cf. Bhandarkar, "Epigraphic Notes," *JBBRAS*, XXIII, 1909, p. 73.
20. *Devī Mahātmya*, ch. II, vs. 9-18.
21. R. C. Agrawal, "A terracotta plaque from Nagar, Rajasthan," *Lalit Kalā*, No. 1-2, pp. 72-73, pl. XVIII, fig. 1.
22. U. P. Shah, "Terracottas from the former Bikaner State," *Lalit Kalā*, No. 8, October 1960, p. 60, pl. XXVI, fig. 23.
23. Fleet, "Gangadhāra Stone Inscription of Viśvavarman, the year 480 (423-24 A. D.)," *CII*, Vol. III, pp. 76-78.
24. Pt. Ramakarma, "Dadhimati Mātā Inscription of the time of Dhruhlaṇa (Gupta) Samvat 289," *EI*, XI, pp. 299-304.
25. B. Ch. Chhabra, "Sakarāi Stone Inscription, 699 V. S.," *EI*, XXVII, pp. 27-33.
26. R. R. Halder, "Samolī Inscription of the time of Śīlāditya, 703 V.S.," *EI*, XX, pp. 97-99.
27. Dasharatha Sharma, *Early Chauhāna Dynasties*, pp. 233-234.

28. G. H. Ojha, Pratappgarh Inscription of the time of the Pratihāra king Mahendrapāla II of Mahodaya Samvat 1003," *EI*, XIV, pp. 176-178.
29. Quoted from *RTA*, p. 378.
30. *Ibid.*
31. *Devī Bhāgavata*, ch. 46, vs. 8-21 and vs. 29-38.
32. *Devī Mahātmya*, ch. II, p. 48, vs. 19-29.
33. *Ibid.*, ch. II, vs. 21-30.
34. P. Chandra, *Stone Sculptures in the Allahabad Museum*, AM/152, pl. 130, Chandrasālā with Mahiṣamardini from Bhūmarā.
35. "Excavations at Bhiṣṭā," *ASIAR*, 1911-12, pl. XXXI, fig. 14.
36. In the Ambikā temple at Jagat (Udaipur), a parrot is carved in the sculptures of the goddess. Cf., R. C. Agrawal, "Mewar, kī Guhila Kalākṛitiyān," *Śodha Patrikā*, XVI (2), 1965, pp. 23-27.
37. *Devī Mahātmya*, ch. III, vs. 37.
38. From Rewāḍā an inscribed image of Mahiṣamardini of this type has been discovered. It is now preserved in the Sardār Museum, Jodhpur. See, Pl. XLV.
39. Fragment of the image of Mahiṣamardini from Nagar (Bharatpur), early 10th century A.D., Amber Museum, No. 103/154.
40. Lower part of the image of Mahiṣamardini from Bagherā (Ajmer), ca. 8th century A.D., Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, Ex. No. 1108 ; See, Pl. XLI.
41. Fragment of an inscribed (V. S. 1234) image of Mahiṣamardini preserved at the Sardār Museum, Jodhpur. See, Pl. XLV.
42. R.C. Agrawal, "Some unpublished Sculptures from South-Western Rajasthan," *Lalit Kalā*, No. 6, April 1959, pp. 65-66, pl. XXIV, fig. 24.
43. See, Pl. XLVI.
44. The Sculpture is preserved in the Navadurgā temple on the bank of Chandrabhāgā, Jhālarāpātan. See, Pl. XLVII.
45. U. P. Shah, "Terracottas from the Former Bikaner State," *Lalit Kalā*, No. 8, October 1960, p. 60.
46. M. Seshadri, "Mahiṣamardini Images, Iconography and Interpretation," *The Journal of the Mysore University* (N. S.), Section A - Arts, Vol. XXII (2), 1963, p. 12.
47. P. Chandra, *Stone Sculptures in the Allahabad Museum*, AM 152, pl. 130.
48. M. Seshadri, "Mahiṣamardini Images, Iconography and Interpretation," *op. cit.*, pl. 5 A and B. These sculptures depict the goddess uplifting the buffalo by the tail and crushing its mouth under her foot.

49. For details about the earliest form of the image of Mahiṣamardini,
See *Infra*, 136.
50. R. C. Agrawal, "A terracotta plaque from Nagar, Rajasthan", *Lalit Kālā*,
No. 1-2, pl. XVIII, fig. 1.
51. Mahiṣamardini image from Jhāḍol, preserved at the Pratāp Museum,
Udaipur.
52. *Infra*, pp.34-36.
53. See, Pl. XLIX.
54. Jhālāwār Museum, Ex. No. 69.
55. *Devī Mahātmya*, Ch. III, vs. 38-39.
56. See, illustration on ch. V.
57. It is lying near the *pradakṣiṇā patha* of the sanctum. See, Pl. IX.
58. See, Pl. LIII.
59. The Sculpture comes from Chandrabhāgā (Jhālārāpāṭan) and is now preserved
in the Jhālāwār Museum (Ex. No. 70). It belongs to the 9th century A.D.
60. Satya Prakash, "Sculptures from Sikar region and Kāmān," *Journal of Indian
Society of Oriental Art*, II, (N. S.), p. 61.
61. The Sculpture showing this type is *in situ* in the temple of Ambikā (Jagat).
See, Pl. LV.
62. M. Seshadri, "Mahiṣamardini Images, Iconography and Interpretation,"
op. cit., pls. 41 and 42.
63. *Devī Mahātmya*, ch. III, vs. 28, 29, 30.
64. See, Pl. LI.
65. R. C. Agrawal, "A Rare Mahiṣamardini relief in the National Museum,"
East and West, Vol. XVI, 1966, Accession No. 59, 153, 135, fig. 4,
pp. 109-111.
66. M. Seshadri, "Mahiṣamardini Images, Iconography and Interpretation,"
op. cit., pls. 17 to 25 and 26 to 31.
67. *Devī Mahātmya*, ch. II, vs. 49 ; ch. IV, vs. 3.
68. *Ibid.*, ch. II, vs. 66 ; ch. IV, vs. 2.
69. *Ibid.*, ch. III, vs. 8.
70. *EHI*, Vol. I, pt. II, Appendix, p. 108.
71. *Ibid.*, pp. 109-110.
72. *Ibid.*, pp. 110-111.
73. *Rāpamaṇḍana*, ch. V, vs. 45-50.
74. *EHI*, Vol. I, pt. II, Appendix, p. 112.

75. *Bṛihat Saṃhitā*, ed., and tr., by Subrahmanya Shastri, and M. R. Bhatt, Bangalore, 1947, p. 517.
76. A. F. R. Hoernle, "The Paṭṭāvalī or list of Pontiffs of the Upakeśagachchha," *Indian Antiquary*, XIX, pp. 233-243.
77. The image is now preserved in the Sardār Museum, Jodhpur ; See, Pl. XLV.
78. U. P. Shah, *Studies in Jaina Art*, Varanasi, 1955, p. 33, fig. No. 71.
79. *Rigveda*, I, 141, 2.
80. *Ibid.*, IX, 102, 4.
81. *MBH*, Virāṭa Parva, ch. 6 ; *MBH*, Bhīṣma Parva, ch. 23.
- ✓ 82. V. S. Agrawala, *The Glorification of the Great Goddess*, p. VIII.
83. *DHI*, p. 504.
84. Fleet, "Gangadhāra Stone Inscription of Viśvavarman, the year 480 ; (A. D. 423-24)," *CII*, III, pp. 76-78.
85. *Bṛihat Saṃhitā*, ch. 58, vs. 56.
86. Kālidāsa, *Kumārasambhavam*, VII, vs. 30.
87. *Devī Mahātmya*, ch. VIII, vs. 12-30 ; *Devī Mahātmya*, IX, vs. 12-20.
88. *Ibid.*, ch. VIII, vs. 12-20.
89. *Ibid.*, ch. IX, vs. 12-20.
90. In a Yoginī temple the Mātrikās are represented into sixty four in number.
91. Bāṇabhaṭṭa, *Harṣacharita*, III, p. 102.
92. J. F. Fleet, "Gangadhāra Stone Inscription of Viśvavarman, the year 480, A.D. 423-24," *CII*, III, p. 76.
93. R. C. Agrawal, "Rock-cut Statues at Arṇā, Jodhpur," *JOI*, Baroda, XXI, No. 4, June 1972, p. 351, and plates ; J. H. Marshall, Daya Ram Sahnī, "Excavations at Maṇḍor," *ASIAR*, 1909-10, pp. 93-994, pl. XL a.
94. See, Pl. XL.
95. *Matsya Purāṇa*, ch. 261, vs. 24-25 ; See also, *Devī Mahātmya*, ch. VIII, vs. 14 ; *Agni Purāṇa*, ch. 51, vs. 18.
96. Image of Brahmāṇī from Mālāgāon, Sirohi, Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, Ex. No. I (86) 321.
97. *Devī Mahātmya*, ch. VIII, vs. 15.
98. *Ibid.*, ch. VIII, vs. 15 ; ch. IV, vs. 14.
99. Image of Kaumārī from Mālāgāon (Sirohi), ca. 800 A.D., Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, Ex. No. I. (88) 23.

100. *Devī Mahātmya*, ch. VIII, vs. 17 ; *Devī Mahātmya*, ch. IX, vs. 15.
101. P. L. Chakravarty, "Dungarpur Kṣetra kī Mūrtiyān : Eka Parichaya," *Śodha Patrikā*, XXIII (3), 1972, pp. 51-67.
102. Jhālāwar Museum, Ex. No. 56.
103. *Devī Mahātmya*, XI, 16.
104. In the *Pañcha makāras* of the t̃āntric practices, *matsya* is mentioned as one of them. On the basis of this, Banerjea upholds the view that it is due to the t̃āntric influence that fish is carved as the attribute of the Vārāhī Mātrikā.
105. Āmber Museum, Ex. No. MIS/109/134.
106. R. C. Agrawal, "British Museum kī eka Mahatvapūrṇa Vārāhī Pratimā," *Śodha Patrikā*, XIII (2), December 1961, pp. 50-61.
107. R.C. Agrawal, "More Sculptures from Amjhārā, Rajasthan," *Arts Asiatiques*, XII, 1965, p. 175.
108. Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, Ex. No. I(87) 322.
109. *Devī Mahātmya*, ch. VIII, vs. 19.
110. *Ibid.*, ch. VIII, vs. 20.
111. R. C. Agrawal, "Brahmanical Sculptures from Bhārat Kalā Bhavan," *Chhavi Swarna Jayanti Grantha*, Bhārat Kalā Bhavan, Varanasi, 1971, p. 176, fig. 343.
112. *Devī Mahātmya*, ch. VII, vs. 3-5, 25.
113. *Ibid.*, ch. VII, vs. 5-6.
114. Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, Ex. No. I (92) 302.
115. See, Pl. L.
116. Image of Chāmuṇḍā from Chandrāvati (Sirohi), ca. 11th century A. D. Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, Ex. No. I (92) 302.
117. Jhālāwār Museum, Ex. No. 28.
118. The image is now preserved in the Jhālāwār Museum, Ex. No. 97.
119. R. C. Agrawal, "Some Unpublished Sculptures from South-Western Rajasthan," *Lalit Kalā*, No. 6, 1959 ; See also, P.L. Chakravarty, "Dungarpur Kṣhetra kī Mūrtiyān - eka Parichaya," *Śodha Patrikā*, XXIII(3), 1972, pp. 51-67.
120. K. N. Puri, *Excavations at Rairh*, pl. 23, fig. 1, p. 29.
- ✓ 121. P. K. Agrawala, *Goddess Vaināyakī in Literature. The Female Gaṇeśa*, Prithivi Prakāshan, Varanasi, 1978, p. 9.
122. *Skanda Purāṇa*, Kāśī Khaṇḍa, ch. 45, vs. 34 ; *Matsya Purāṇa*, ch. 179, vs. 8-32.
123. R. C. Majumdar, *Age of Imperial Kanauja*, Vidya Bhavan Series, Bombay, 1964, p. 341.

124. See, Pl. XI.
125. Cunningham has given the list of inscribed yoginīs. See, Cunningham, *Report of a Tour in the Central Provinces in 1873-74*, Vol. IX, pl. XVI, pp. 60-70 ; R. D. Banerjee, *The Haihayas of Tripuri and their Monuments*, Memoir, A. S. I., No. 23, 1922, pp. 79-90.
126. B. N. Sharma, "Vaināyaki in Mediaeval Indian Art," *Oriental Art*, (N.S.) XVI (2), 1970, pp. 169-172 ; Dasharatha Sharma, "Chaunsatha Yogini," *Varadā* (Bisau), V, (3), July 1962, p. 53.
127. D. Bhattacharya has published a description of *Śakti-Gaṇapati* from the *Śilpa Ratna* written by Śrī Kumāra. The *Śilpa Ratna* belongs to the 16th century A. D. Quoted from B. N. Sharma, "Vaināyaki in Mediaeval Indian Art," *op. cit.*, p. 172.
128. U. P. Shah, "Iconography of Chakreśvarī - the Yakṣī of Rṣabhanātha," *JOI*, XX, 1970-71, p. 286.
129. Neelima Vashishtha, "Mayūra Vāhanā Sarasvatī - An Example of Religious Tolerance during the post-Gupta period," *Jijñāsā - A Journal of the History of Ideas and Culture*, Vol. I (1 and 2), January-April, 1974, pp. 89-102.
130. S. K. Jaina, "Some Common elements in the Jaina and Hindu Pantheon - Yakṣas and Yakṣiṇīs," *Jaina Antiquary*, XVIII, (2), 1952, pp. 32-35.
131. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, I, ch. 9, vs. 100-105.
132. "Excavations at Bhiṭa," *ASIAR*, 1911-12, pls. XVIII-XIX, pp. 52 ff.
133. "Excavations at Basārḥ," *ASIAR*, 1903-04, pls. XL-XLI, pp. 107 ff ; See also, *DHI*, pp. 193-94.
134. *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, III, ch. 82, vs. 7-8.
135. *Ibid.*, III, ch. 82, vs. 10.
136. The image is lying among the loose sculptures in the compound of the Nīlakaṇṭha temple at Parānagar (Alwar).
137. Image of Gajalakṣmī from Osia (ca. 9th century A. D.), Sardār Museum, Jodhpur, Ex. No. 107/12485.
138. Image of Gajalakṣmī from Ābānerī, Āmber Museum, Ex. No. Ab/14/139.
139. In the Sun temple at Jhālarāpāṭan the image of Gajalakṣmī is *in situ*. It is carved on the *Śukanāsā* portion of the *śikhara*.
140. See, Pl. LIV.
141. B. Ch. Chabra, "Sakarai Stone Inscription, V.S. 699," *EI*, XXVII, pp. 27-33; No year has been given in the inscription, therefore, these writers have assigned different dates to it. See also, V. V. Mirashi, "Epigraphic Notes," *JGRI*, VIII (1), 1950, pp. 77-82 ; Bhandarkar *ARRMA*, 1933-34, p. 2.

142. *MBH*, II, ch. 10, vs. 9 ; III, ch. 168, vs. 3.
143. John Marshall, Alfred Foucher and N. G. Majumdar, *The Monuments of Sanchi*, Vol. 2, Archaeological Survey, Government of India Publication, pls. XI, XXIV, XXV.
144. A. K. Coomaraswamy, *Elements of Buddhist Iconography*, 2nd edn., Munshiram Manoharlal, New Delhi, 1972, pp. 22, 41 n.
145. *Kalpa Sūtra*, 31-46 ; Quoted from U. P. Shah, *Studies in Jaina Art*, pp. 105-108.
146. *Mahā Purāṇa*, XII, vs. 101-119 ; *Harivaṃśa Purāṇa*, VIII, vs. 58-74.
147. The sculptures of the Ananta Gumpā Cave are ascribed to Jaina religion. See, Shah, *Studies in Jaina Art*, p. 7.
148. V. N. Hari Rao, "The symbolism of Gaja Lakṣmī," *JIH*, XLVIII, April 1970, p. 75.
149. D. R. Sahni, "A Note on two Brass Images," *JUPHS*, II, 1919-21, pp. 68-72.
150. Shah, *Studies in Jaina Art*, fig. 70.
151. *Rigveda*, X, 75.
152. *Ibid.*, I, 3, 11, 12.
153. *Agni Purāṇa*, ch. 49, vs. 15 ; See also, *Matsya Purāṇa*, ch. 260, vs. 44.
154. The sculptures of Śeṣaśāyī Viṣṇu represent Lakṣmī and Vāgdevī with the image of Viṣṇu.
155. *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, III, ch. 64, vs. 1-3 ; See also, *Agni Purāṇa*, ch. 50, vs. 16.
156. *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, III, 64, 3.
157. *Amśumadbhedāgama*, Quoted from *EHI*, Vol. I, pt. II, Appendix, pp. 136-137.
158. *Rūpamaṇḍana*, V, vs. 62-63.
159. *EHI*, Vol. I, pt. II, Appendix, pp. 136-137.
160. *Ibid.*, p. 138.
161. Bāṇabhaṭṭa, *Harṣacharita*, I, p. 11.
162. B. Bhattacharya, *Iconography of Buddhist Image*, pp. 349-350.
163. V. A. Smith, *The Jaina Stupa and other Antiquities*, 2nd, edn., *ASI*, New Imperial Series, 1969, Vol. XIX, p. 56.
164. At present there is no image of Kṣemankarī in the sanctum but the pedestal and the damaged *prabhāvalī* which is still *in situ*, depicts two lions seated back to back under the seat. It suggests that the image was of Kṣemankarī. See also, M. A. Dhaky, "Kṣemankarī - the cult image of the Ambikā Temple, Jagat", *VIJ*, VI, 1968, pp. 117-120.

165. The image is preserved in the sanctum of the temple at Harṣanātha (Sikar). See Pl. X.
166. G. H. Ojha, "Pratapgarh Inscription of the time of Pratihāra king Mahendrapāla II, of Mahodaya, Samvat 1003," *EI*, XIV, 1917-18, pp. 176-188 ; D. R. Bhandarkar, "Epigraphic Notes and Questions of Pratapgarh Inscription," *Indian Antiquary*, XLV, 1916, Bombay, pp. 122-124.
167. G. H. Ojha, "Pratapgarh Inscription of the time of Pratihāra king Mahendrapāla II of Mahodaya, Samvat 1003," *EI*, XIV, 1917-18, pp. 176-188, vs. 3.





6

Sun Images

The worship of Sūrya was prevalent not only in India but in other ancient civilizations also such as the civilizations of Egypt, Greece and Iran. The daily rising of the Sun in the sky, and its beneficent and light-giving aspects inspired people to worship it as a god. Like the other deities, the Sun was also widely worshipped in Rajasthan.

I

Worship of Sun

The development of the Sun-worship in India can be traced from the pre-historic cultures to the 10th century A.D.,¹ in three forms, viz., (a) Natural (b) Symbolic and (c) image form.

Worship in (a) Natural and (b) Symbolic forms

The earliest literary and archaeological evidences indicate that the object of Sun-worship was most probably its natural form, or some symbols representing the solar orb. In the later Vedic religion some symbols were conceived to represent Him in solar sacrifices and worship. The forms of a rayed-disc or a simple round orb, *svastika* and a wheel were conceived to represent Him in the Vedic rituals. This is also substantiated by the finds of the Indus Valley where the Sun is depicted in similar forms.² A reference to the gold disc placed on the altar to represent the sun is found in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*.³

In the *Rigveda*, the natural light-giving and beneficent aspects of this luminary body are emphasized, though its anthropomorphic form is also elaborately narrated. The Sun-god is given many names such as – Pūṣan, Aryamān, Bhaga, Savitri, Vivasvāna, Mitra and Viṣṇu to signify his various aspects. He is described as riding a chariot drawn by two⁴ seven or more horses.⁵ His chariot has only one wheel,⁶ with three naves. He shines and destroys darkness⁷ and delivers mankind from disease and trouble.⁸ Above all, his luminous physical orb which traverses the sky is referred to and worshipped in every hymn of the *Rigveda*.

The archaeological data of the pre-historic rock paintings⁹ and proto-historic sites of the Mohenjodaro and the Harappan

cultures¹⁰ also testify that the Sun was worshipped only in his natural form or through symbols. The popular symbols representing Him were the round orb, rayed disc, the *svastika* and the spoked wheel, as they were associated with Him in some way or the other.¹¹ A rock-painting of the pre-historic period from Simhanpura (M.P.), shows a semi-circular figure with lines suggesting the rays of the rising Sun. Here a man is painted as paying homage to the rising Sun. The figure of the Sun is also depicted in the rock paintings of the other places.¹² The seals and painted pottery of this period suggest that the representation of the Sun was mostly naturalistic and geometric in form. These devices used to represent Him in the pre-historic and proto-historic periods also continued in the later period as could be gleaned from the indigenous coins from Taxila, the punch-marked and other coins from Northern India.¹³

(c) Worship in image form

In the 2nd century B. C., the earliest image of the Sun-god was first conceived according to the description of the Vedic hymns and this tradition of sculptural representation continued up to the 2nd century A.D. Hence the examples of sculptural representation found during the period at Ananta Gumphā cave (Khaṇḍagiri Hills, Orissa, 2nd century B.C.),¹⁴ Chandraketurah (24 Parganās, West Bengal, 1st century B. C.),¹⁵ Bhājā Caves (1st Century B. C.),¹⁶ Bodh Gayā railing (1st century B.C.),¹⁷ and the Lālā Bhagat Pillar (Kānpur, 2nd century A.D.)¹⁸ are in accordance with the descriptions of Vedic hymns. These images of the Sun-god are carved as seated on a one-wheeled chariot drawn by four horses, holding two lotus flowers in the hands and the lower portions of the figures are kept hidden behind the chariot. He is also shown accompanied by two female archers, Uṣā and Pratyusā, who are shooting arrows, which symbolize the rays of the Sun destroying the demons of darkness.

These images depict the morning scene as was visualized by the Vedic *ṛiṣis*. They represent the Sun-god coming up in the sky and crushing the demons of darkness under His chariot. The sculptor of the Lālā Bhagat pillar has even gone a step further in

representing the whole scene of sunrise. He has carved the lotus pond with lotuses blooming in the day light and the demons are shown crushed under the chariot.¹⁹

Alien Features of the Sun-Images :—The carving of alien features such as the dress, the waist girdle and long boots in the Sun images of India had started from the 4th century A. D. However, a group of scholars have traced the alien impact on the Sun images of India even long before the 4th century A.D. They see the Greek influence²⁰ on the aforesaid images of Bodh Gayā and Bhājā (ca. 2nd century B.C.) on the basis of the Greek coins of Philoxenus and Telephus and Greek mythology.²¹ They contend that in the Sun images of these places, the Sun-god is depicted as riding on a four-horsed chariot similar to the coin of Helios, the Greek Sun-god. Therefore, they ascribe the beginning of the carving of the Sun images to the Indo-Greek influence and not to the indigenous tradition.²²

However, their view does not seem correct as these types of Sun images were not only confined to one part of India, i.e., the Punjab and the Western India, where the influence of the Indo-Greeks was most felt, but they were also found in its eastern and southern extremities – as Orissa, West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and in the regions of South India. The provenance of similar type of Sun images from the widely scattered areas of the country suggest a common indigenous source which influenced the carving of these images throughout India. This source was the Vedic literature itself. The four horses of the chariot of these images symbolize the Indian tradition of four *yugas* or four positions of the Sun at midnight, sunrise, noon and sunset respectively.²³ These are also symbolized by the *svastika*. Therefore, these images with a chariot drawn by four horses cannot be ascribed to the Greek influence but can be traced to the Vedic tradition.

The possibility of Iranian influence on the indigenous Sun images before the 4th century A.D., too cannot be accepted. Of course, before this period Sun-worship similar to that of the Iranians was prevalent in India. This is substantiated by the

discovery of fire altars and Sun-discs of the proto-historic period from the excavations of Bāmbāt,²⁴ now in Pakistan. There was a similarity in the object and the mode of the Iranian and Indian Sun-worship because the Aryans of India belonged to the same group of Indo-Aryans to which the Iranians belonged.²⁵ Even the names of the Sun-god — Mitra, Aryamān and Bhaga of the Indians are identical with Mithra, Airyaman and Baga or Bago of the Iranians.²⁶ Moreover, like the Iranians, the early Indians were not used to the tradition of erecting statues of gods or temples ; instead they worshipped the natural form of the Sun, the Moon, the Earth, fire, etc., and offered sacrifices to them in open places. The descriptions of the Sun-god in the *Mihir Yashts*²⁷ and the *Rigveda* suggest the same fact. But as far as the carving of the image of the Sun in Iran is concerned, the first anthropomorphic representation is found only in ca. 4th century A.D.,²⁸ whereas in India the carving of the Sun images was already in vogue from the 2nd century B.C. It is because of this that the influence of the characteristics of the Iranian Sun images is discernible on that of the Sun images of India from the 4th century A.D., and not before.

The Magi priests, who had started coming to India with the Iranians from the time of the Achaemenid invasions (ca. 5th century B.C.) were instrumental in carrying this influence to India.²⁹ As a result of the contact of the indigenous Sun-worshippers with them, the Iranian features of the Sun images crept into the iconography of the indigenous images of Sūrya specially in the areas of Punjab and Western India where they had gradually settled down. The images of the Sun wearing boots, a waist-girdle and a breast-plate along with the indigenous characteristics of a chariot, drawn by horses, two full blown lotus flowers and the accessory figures of Aruṇa, Uṣā and Pratyusā began to be carved from the 4th century A.D., in Northern India. For instance, a black slate stone figure of the Sun-god³⁰ from the site of Gāndhāra shows the beginning of the fusion of the two sects. In this image the God is seated in a four-horsed chariot while Uṣā and Pratyusā are standing on either side of him. The image is damaged but its remains show the high boots in the feet of the God. It appears that the sculptor was

well posted with the indigenous mode of carving the Sun images, but he introduced some iconographical innovations in conformity with the new emerging local convention and according to the needs of the reoriented cult.³¹ The contact of the indigenous sculptors with the Magi priests gave a fresh fillip to the carving of the Sun images which had probably fallen in abeyance during the 3rd century A.D., in Northern India.

This fusion of the two cults, where the Sun-god was conceived wearing boots and holding lotuses and having other Indian characteristics, was achieved under the patronage of the Scythians where the Gāndhāra art developed. Gradually, the carving of this type of mixed images became common among the Indian artists. Consequently, during the Gupta and post-Gupta periods these alien elements were so subdued and Indianized by the genius of the Indian sculptors that their inclusion did not seem out of place in the indigenous scheme of the Sun images of Northern India.³²

These alien features were accepted in the iconography of the indigenous Sun images so gradually that the earlier Indian texts did not mention them. The easy acceptability of the Iranian features in the indigenous Sun images could be ascribed to the already existing rapport between them due to their common origin and the similarity in their modes of Sun-worship.

It is to be noted that in the absence of such a foreign contact, the Sun images of South India continued to be carved in the indigenous form ; having bare legs and feet adorned with *nāpura*, holding two lotus buds in the hands and wearing an *udarabandha*.³³

It is interesting to observe that the worship of the Sun-god in image form and the Vedic tradition of worshipping Him in natural form continued side by side in India. The discovery of His image in the Bhājā Cave (2nd century B.C.) and His temple at Mandasaura (437 A.D.)³⁴ and Indore (465-66 A. D.)³⁵ show the continuity of the tradition of worshipping Him in the image form.

While the worship of the sun in the natural form is attested by Bāṇabhaṭṭa,³⁶ who states that Prabhākara Vardhana was a great devotee of the Sun, and he worshipped the rising Sun daily.

Description of Alien Features in Literature :—Examples from literature also suggest the filtration of the foreign characteristics into the indigenous sculptural representations of the Sun images in Northern India after the 4th century A.D. In literature the earliest reference to the dress of the Sun-god, having alien features is found in the *Bṛihat Samhitā*, which explicitly states that his image should be carved in an *udīchyaveśa* i.e., a northerner's dress — the waist girdle, the *viyadga* and *kañchuka* covering the body : *kuryādudīchyaveśam gūḍham padādūro yavat ... kuṇḍalabhūṣitavandanāḥ pralambahāro viyadgavrittaḥ*.³⁷

In the *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, the image of the Sun is described as having moustaches, *udīchyaveśa*, adorned with all ornaments, covered with a *kavacha* and wearing a waist girdle : *Raviḥ kāryaḥ śubhaśmaśruḥ sindūrārūṇasamaprabhaḥ, Udīchyaveśaḥ svākāraḥ sarvābharāṇasamīyutaḥ. Chaturbāhuḥ mahātejāḥ kavachenābhisamvritaḥ, karttavya raśana chāsya yāviyāṇgeti sanjñita*.³⁸ Here the waist girdle, which was known as the *viyanga* or the *aviyanga* and was also identified with *aivyāonghen* of Avestan language, signifies *kuṣṭi* which is worn by the Parsees even today.³⁹ The *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* also explains the *avyanga* as the waist girdle. Moreover, it suggests that even the accessory figures of the attendants — Daṇḍa and Pingala — should be carved in the dress of the northerner : *udīchyaveśau karttavyau tāvubhāvapi*.⁴⁰ Further, it states that the chariot of the Sun-god should be shown as drawn by seven horses and having only one wheel : *Ekachakreatha saptaśve śaḍare vānke rathottame*.⁴¹

The *Matsya Purāṇa* also delineates the image of the Sun covering the body with a *cholaka* from waist to feet. It states that His image should be carved donning two pieces of clothes ; (i) one as the upper garment covering the shoulders and back, whose *gātrikā-granthi* is invariably visible in the images of Sūrya, (ii) while the other, as the lower garment, covering the feet up to the knees

or ankles. It only makes a passing reference to the feet of the Sun covered with effulgence but does not mention Him wearing boots : *cholakāchhannavapuṣaṁ kvachichchitreṣu darśayet, vastrayugmasamopetaṁ charaṇau tejasāvritam*.⁴² It states that these types of images were carved only in some parts of India, which could be nowhere else than in Northern India, where they are discovered.

Reference to the *udīchyaveśa* of the Sun-god has also been made by Bāṇabhaṭṭa in the *Harṣacharita*. He describes this dress as *varabāṇa* which is made out of *stavaraka* cloth : *Kaṇchukaiśchāpachitachīnacholakaiścha taramuktastabakitastavarakavārabāṇaiścha*.⁴³ V. S. Agrawala has identified this dress with that of the Sun images of Iran of the Sassanian period (4th century A.D.).⁴⁴ It is also very much like that of the rulers of the Sassanian Iran⁴⁵ as depicted in the contemporary paintings of Iran.

The above literary references clearly show the alien impact which had crept into the images of the Sun in Northern India but none of them explicitly mentions the boots of the Sun-god,⁴⁶ which were begun to be carved in the Sun images as a result of this impact. The boots had become a conspicuous feature of the dress of the Sun images in Northern India. Moreover, the paucity of the literary references to the *udīchyaveśa* of the Sun-god indicates that the carving of such type of images was prevalent only in Punjab and Western India where the impact of the foreigners was most felt.

Fusion of the Foreign Impact

The attempt to assimilate the alien features, specially the boots of the Sun-god into the indigenous Sun images is visible in the Epic and the Paurāṇic literature. In the *Mahābhārata* some myths were invented to explain these features.⁴⁷ A legend of the *Mahābhārata* refers to the introduction of the leather boots by the Sun-god. The god presents *charma pādūkās* and a *chhatra* to the wife of a *ṛiṣi* as guards against the burning heat of the Sun.⁴⁸ In the *Varāha Purāṇa* a reference has been made to the Sun-god

offering water, umbrella and leather boots to a king and his wife.⁴⁹ Another story in the *Mahābhārata*, referring to the *kavacha* and *kuṇḍala* of Karna mentions that they could not be separated unless cut from the body,⁵⁰ which denotes the *udīchyaveśa* of the reoriented image of the Sun-god. These legends indicate the conscious efforts made by the Indians to hide and Indianize the alien features in the indigenous Sun images.

In the *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, an attempt to identify these features with Indian ornaments is clearly evident. It refers to the *kañchuka* and the waist girdle as the *raśana* and identifies it with *avyanga* : *kartavyā raśana chāsya yāviyāṅgeti sanjñita*.⁵¹ The later *Purāṇas*⁵² explicitly refer to the story of Samba who brought the Magas from Śakadvīpa to get the Sun image installed and worshipped at Multan. This suggests that the new form of the Saura sect was being slowly associated with Vaiṣṇavism. The references to this story in the epigraphs⁵³ indicate that by the 12th century A.D., it was completely merged in the Indian Saura sect.

In the earlier indigenous Sun images, the feet of the Sun-god were kept hidden behind the chariot as was specified in the Paurāṇic texts that His feet should not be shown but they should be covered with effulgence.⁵⁴ The legend prohibiting the carving of His feet is narrated with details in the *Markaṇḍeya Purāṇa*⁵⁵ and the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*.⁵⁶ Viśvakarmā reduced the unbearable heat of the body of the Sun-god except that of his legs. As a result of this, His legs remained more effulgent than the rest of His body ; hence they could not be seen by the naked eyes. Moreover, the *Matsya*,⁵⁷ the *Samba* and the *Padma Purāṇas* clearly state that the feet of the Sun image should not be carved ; and that whoever did so would suffer from misery and leprosy. It was to overcome this shortcoming that the artists adopted different devices in the carving of the Sun images. First among these was to carve the chariot in front of the legs⁵⁸ ; secondly, to show a diffused outline of His legs and feet leaving out the details of the knees, fingers, etc. ;⁵⁹ and thirdly, under the foreign spell, boots were introduced in the Sun images from the Gupta period.⁶⁰ The inclusion of the boots was

not objected to as they covered the feet of the Sun images. Besides, this device was also in conformity with the indigenous tradition of not carving the feet according to the Paurāṇic injunctions. Though it was an alien one, it was fused in the reoriented Sun cult by the 12th century A.D.

This assimilation was so gradual and complete that the later texts like the *Rupamaṇḍana*, a text reflecting the sculptural traditions of Rajasthan, does not give any instructions about the carving of the legs and feet⁶¹ of the Sun-god. This only indicates that by the time of Maṇḍana the Sun-worship was either in the state of decline or it was forgotten that long ago alien elements had crept in the dress of the images of the Sun-god. This is also evident in the images of the Sun-god of this period. Though few in number, the images of the Sun-god predominantly represent the alien features.

Like the *Rupamaṇḍana*, other texts of the later period also do not mention the dress of the Sun-god. The *Viśvakarmāvatara Śāstra*⁶² only refers to one wheel, seven horses, *kavacha*, two full blown lotuses and Aruṇa as the charioteer. The *Mānasollāsa*⁶³ also makes a passing reference to cover the feet of Sun-god with effulgence, besides mentioning the other characteristics. It was left to the genius of the sculptor to adopt any device to fulfil the instructions of the texts. The *udīchyaveśa* had become such a common feature that Hemadri, who flourished in the 13th century A.D.,⁶⁴ prescribes it for the two other gods, viz., Chitrāgupta and Kubera.

The above hypothesis is also corroborated by the sculptures. In the sculptures between the 2nd century B. C., and 2nd century A.D., a chariot was used as a device to hide the feet of the Sun-god, while in the sculptures of the later period, the outline was diffused to hide His feet. In the images of ca. 8th and 10th centuries A.D., His chariot becomes insignificant and He is depicted standing on a lotus and wearing boots. The horses and the charioteer are carved below the lotus seat only as a symbol of the images. In these images sometimes the figure of *chhaya* is carved in front of

the legs, which also keeps them somewhat hidden from view. In this way the leather shoes, which are kept hidden, become insignificant.

In the later period, these alien features became subdued in the Sun images of Eastern India. For instance, in the images of the Sun-god in Konārka (13th century A.D.) the *kavacha* and the girdle have completely disappeared. Here the inscribed image of the Sun-god — Puṣan is carved without a *kavacha* and *avyanga*. The image shows a thin covering on the feet with marked edges on the knees⁶⁵ which is contrary to the inscribed *dhyāna* on the image that the Sun-god should be carved wearing an armour. Another image of the Sun-god is carved barefooted where he is represented in a group of planets.⁶⁶ Therefore, on the basis of the Sun images of Eastern India, Dr. Banerjea⁶⁷ gave currency to the theory that the assimilation of the alien features of the Sūrya images, both in the indigenous images and literature, was gradual and subdued. However, this theory is not applicable to the images of the western part of India specially Rajasthan, Punjab and Gujarat⁶⁸ where the effect of the foreign Saura cult was most felt. The Sūrya sculptures from Rajasthan substantiate this point.

II

Sculptural Representation

During the post-Gupta period in Rajasthan, the Sun images are generally depicted in two forms : (i) seated on the chariot driven by seven horses, and (ii) standing on a *triratha* pedestal on which sometimes seven horses driven by Aruṇa are carved. The seven horses and the charioteer Aruṇa are only carved as a cognizance in the later images.

(i) Images of the Sun seated on Chariot

The seated images of the Sun were generally carved in ca. 8th and 9th centuries A. D., though some examples of the continuity of this tradition are found in the early part of the 10th century A.D. In these types of images, the figure of the Sun is carved cross-legged, seated on a lotus seat and below his seat is carved a seven-horsed chariot with the charioteer Aruṇa seated on

the central horse pulling the reins of the horses. The legs of the Sun-god with high boots are clearly shown in these images. His image is depicted wearing a *kavacha* and holding two full blown lotus flowers. The accessory figures of the *Parivāradevatās* are also carved on the sides of the Sun-god. These types of images are found in the Sun temples at Chittor (ca. 8th century A.D.),⁶⁹ Varmāṇ (Sirohi, ca. 9th century A.D.),⁷⁰ Tūsa (Udaipur, ca. 9th Century A.D.)⁷¹ and Anādrā (Sirohi, ca. early 10th century A.D.). In these representations the chariot is not used as a device to cover the feet, as was done in the early images of the Sun of ca. 1st century B.C., to 2nd century A.D., in India. These images with boots clearly show the Iranian impact on them.

(ii) Standing Images of Sun

(a) The standing images of Sūrya found between the 9th and 10th centuries A.D., reveal a pervading Iranian impact on them. In these images, the Sun-god is carved, not riding a chariot, but standing on a lotus pedestal, wearing a *kavacha*, a *cholaka* from the waist to feet and holding two full blown lotus flowers or bunch of lotus buds in the hands. In these images the *parivāradevatās* were also represented though their number varied. For instance, the standing image of Sūrya of ca. 9th century A.D., from Ābānerī⁷² represents all these features with bunches of lotus buds in the hands instead of full blown lotus flowers. The image of Sūrya-Nārāyaṇa (ca. 9th century A.D.)⁷³ of the same place also shows bunches of lotus buds in the hands. The standing images of Sūrya from Osia (ca. 9th century A.D.),⁷⁴ Sikar (10th century A.D.)⁷⁵ and Ajāri (10th century A.D.), share the common characteristics of their group with the difference that unlike the Sūrya image from Ābānerī, they are represented with full blown lotus flowers in the hands. Like their counterpart in Ābānerī, the *cholaka* of these images is represented as covering the body from waist to feet but not tightly fitted. They show the Iranian influence in the sense that their dress resembles that of the statues of the Indo-Scythian kings.⁷⁶

In these standing images of the Sun, the representation of the chariot, the prominent indigenous characteristics of the Sun-god

is dropped, though stray examples of carving the motif of seven horses and Aruṇa are found in a very small size on the pedestal below the lotus seat. For instance, in the image of Sūrya on the composite Śiva-linga from Bharatpur (ca. 9th century A.D.), the horses are carved on the pedestal of his image.

(b) Along with the carving of these types of standing Sūrya images, the tradition of depicting them with profuse ornaments also developed in the 9th century A.D. As a result of this, the *cholaka* is not shown clearly in the image though the lotus flowers, the *kavacha* and the *parivāradevatās* continued to be represented like the other standing images of the Sun. Instead of the *cholaka*, the body is shown covered with a profusely carved girdle and long boots covering the feet up to the knees. The ornamentation is fully achieved in the carving of the Sūrya images and their accessory figures of Bharatpur (late 9th century A.D.)⁷⁷ and Sikar (10th century A.D.).⁷⁸ Among them the images from Sikar could be considered as one of the most beautiful images of the Sun-god in Rajasthan. Here the *cholaka* has completely disappeared, and the long boots and the beautiful Indian girdle have taken its place. In the hands, he holds a full-blown lotus along with the bunch of lotus buds. His figure is not overcrowded with the accessory figures except for the four figures of the *parivāradevatās*, two of them standing on either side of him. Perfect balance is maintained by carving the figures of Uṣā and Pratyusā near His shoulders.

The study of Sūrya sculptures makes it clear that the artists of Rajasthan could carve the Sun images in the *udīchyaveśa* because they were aware of its meaning, even though most of the iconographic texts were reticent about it and none of them had fully explained its meaning. This became possible because they came in contact with foreigners like the Magi priests, who had settled in this part of India. Therefore, they found it easier to imagine and carve the Sun images in the *udīchyaveśa*. While doing so, they also assimilated the descriptions of the *Bṛihat Saṁhita* and the *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* in the carving of the Sun images. As a result of this, the carving of the Sun images with alien and

indigenous features became possible in Rajasthan as it had in other parts of North India.

III

Sun Temples of Rajasthan

During the post-Gupta period, the patronage of Pratihāra rulers gave an impetus to the worship of the Sun in Rajasthan specially in the regions of Mewar, Sirohi and Marwar where a large number of temples and images of Sun have been discovered. Among the Pratihāra rulers Rāmabhadra and Vināyakapāla were described as the "*paramāditya bhakta*"⁷⁹ in the epigraphs of this period. They also donated profusely to the temples of the Sun.

Mewar

Among the Sun temples in Rajasthan, the earliest temple (713 A.D.) extant is situated in the fort of Chittor.⁸⁰ It was converted into a temple of Devī, when the worship of the Sun lost its popularity in the late mediaeval period. Besides this one, there is a temple of the Sun at Tūsa, where Sun images are exclusively carved on its exterior.⁸¹

Sirohi

As in Mewar, Sun-worship was extremely popular in the region of Sirohi during the 8th and 10th centuries A. D. Every village or small town here had a temple dedicated to the Sun-god. His images from Chandrāvati,⁸² Ajāri,⁸³ Mūngathalā,⁸⁴ Mālāgāon,⁸⁵ Sāntapur,⁸⁶ Roheḍā,⁸⁷ Niṭorā,⁸⁸ Kusmā,⁸⁹ and Anādrā⁹⁰ are enough to prove the popularity of Sun-worship in the region.

An interesting feature of these temples was their *chakra stambha*. Following the tradition of the erection of *Garuḍa-dhvajas* in front of the Vaiṣṇava temples, the columns with a wheel were also erected in front of the temples of the Sun in this region. Accordingly, a lotus shaped *chakra* (wheel) was carved on the top of the stone column. In the Sun temples at Piṇḍwārā,⁹¹ and Anādrā the *chakra* is still lying in its front. This confirms the view

that the wheel of the chariot of the Sun-god was installed on a pillar in front of His temples as His symbol.

This feature is common in the Sun temples of Rajasthan. For instance, a wheel of *chakra-stambha* most probably that of the ruined Sun temple of Indrāditya (1003 V. S.)⁹² is found in the Ghonṭavārṣikaviṣaya (present Ghoṭarsī, Pratapgarh). Wheels of the *chakra-stambhas* were also found in the ruins of the Sun temples (ca. 11th century A.D.) at Chīnch⁹³ and Talwārā⁹⁴ in Bānswārā. The *chakra-stambhas*, though of a later period, have also been found in the temples at Niṭorā (12th century A. D.)⁹⁵ and Vasā 1204 A.D.)⁹⁶ in Sirohi. These examples prove that the tradition of erecting *chakra-stambhas* was prevalent in the Sun temples of Rajasthan and that the tradition remained in vogue in the region till the mediaeval period.

The Sun temples of Sirohi reveal that the Sun cult gradually merged into the fold of Vaiṣṇavism, mainly because of two reasons : One, Viṣṇu was considered to be one of the Ādityas and two, Vaiṣṇavism gained popularity over the Sūrya cult. The process of this transformation can be seen from the extant images of Sūrya-Nārāyaṇa and many other Vaiṣṇava images of Sun temples where the images of Sūrya-Nārāyaṇa later emerged as that of Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa.⁹⁷ Ample examples are found in the temples of Rajasthan, where the image of the Sun was replaced by the image of Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa after the 11th century A.D.

When Sun-worship declined, the image of the Sun-god was replaced by the image of Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa in the temple at Piṇḍwārā.⁹⁸ For the same reason, the Sun temples at Roheḍa,⁹⁹ which is now known as the Rāmachandra temple, and at Anādra¹⁰⁰ were also converted into those of Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa.

The process of the merging of the Sun cult into Vaiṣṇavism could also be inferred from the images of the Sūrya-Nārāyaṇa, or other composite forms of Sūrya which were usually enshrined in the earlier Sun temples. Because Viṣṇu was identified as one of the twelve Ādityas, it became possible to synthesize the

image of the Sun with that of the former. For instance, the Sun temple at Varmāṇa (ca. 10th-11th century A.D.), which is now known as the Brahmanā Swāmī,¹⁰¹ originally had an image of Sūrya-Nārāyaṇa in its sanctum. Here the discovery of one elaborately carved but damaged sculpture of Sūrya riding a big seven-horsed chariot, representing the composite form of Sūrya and Viṣṇu confirms the view that it was enshrined in the sanctum.¹⁰² The sculpture represents the chariot of seven horses, the charioteer flanked by two figures, one carrying a *chakra* and the other probably a conch. From this, it could be surmised that the broken upper part of the sculpture must have been an image of a composite form of Sūrya-Nārāyaṇa.¹⁰³

Marwar

Another region, where Sun-worship was popular, was Marwar. In this region the worship of the Sun and the construction of His temples were popular between the 7th and the 8th centuries A.D., but the epigraphs of this period are silent about it. The epigraphic references about the Sun temples are found only from the beginning of the 12th century A.D. However, it can not be denied that the famous temple of Jagat Swāmī at Bhīnmāla has been frequently referred to in the Paurāṇic literature.¹⁰⁴ The exact date of its construction is not known but an inscription reveals that it was renovated in 1066 A.D.¹⁰⁵

In Marwar, was another centre of the Sun cult. The magnificent Sun temple at Osia is different from the other Sun temples of Rajasthan found at Chittor, Tūsa and Varmāṇa. In the latter three temples, the images of the Sun-god are studded in all the principal niches of the exterior of their sanctum, while in the former the image of the Sun is enshrined only in the back principal niche while all the other sculptures represent Vaiṣṇava themes. This is because Osia was already the stronghold of Vaiṣṇava worshippers when the Sun temple came into existence ; therefore, a compromise between the two sects was natural and spontaneous. Thus the Sun temple at Osia provides another example of the process of the absorption of the Saura sect in the Vaiṣṇava sect.

The gradual assimilation of the two sects is also visible in the Sun temples at Jhalarāpāṭan, Būdhādeet (Kota), Iswāl and Palāḍī. In these temples, besides the Sun images in the sanctum, back principal niche and dedicatory block, the images of Vaiṣṇava incarnations and other themes were profusely carved in the niches of the exterior, lintel and door jambs.

This amalgamation is presented in a strange manner, in the Sun temple at Raṇakpur. Here, the carving of the chariot of the Sun-god is evolved in an original manner. The whole temple is conceived as a chariot of the Sun-god with innumerable horses. The whole exterior of the sanctum, *antarāla*, and *sabhāmaṇḍapa* is decorated with a row of prancing horses, serving as the seat of gods, whose images are carved above them. Every god and goddess is carved with two full blown lotuses, the emblem of the Sun, along with their respective *ayudhas*. In this way along with the Sun-god are depicted the composite images of Śiva, Brahmā and Viṣṇu. The main image of the temple is lost but a composite image of Śiva and Sūrya is *in situ* in its back principal niche. Therefore, it can not be ascertained whether the object of worship in the temple was the Sun-god or His composite form.

The worship of the Sun-god was less popular in the eastern part of Rajasthan. Therefore, only stray examples of Sun-worship are found there. Sun temples are found at Satwās (Bharatpur),¹⁰⁶ Būdhādeet (Kota)¹⁰⁷ and Jhalarāpāṭan (Jhālāwār). Besides, the epigraphic evidence also refers to a temple of the sun at Dholpur,¹⁰⁸ although now there is no trace of any temple or image of the Sun. The temple at Thānwalā (Ajmer), which is referred to as the sun temple in the inscription,¹⁰⁹ now enshrines an image of Śiva. In the later period many of the Sun temples were converted to that of the other sects.

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83. Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, Ex. No. 292.
84. Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, Ex. No. 305.
85. Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, Ex. No. 328.
86. Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, Ex. No. 304.
87. Lata Sita Ram, *History of Sirohi Raj*, Allahabad, 1920, p. 37.
88. G. H. Ojha, *Sirohī Rājya kā Itihāsa*, Vedic Yantralaya, Ajmer, 1911, pp. 35-36.
89. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
90. *Ibid.*, p. 50.
91. Lala Sita Ram, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-33 ; Ojha, *Sirohī Rājya kā Itihāsa*, p. 26.
92. Ojha, *Pratāpgarh Rājya kā Itihāsa*, pt. I, 1941, p. 23 ; *EL*, XIV, pp. 176-188 ; *ASIAR*, 1935-36, p. 110.
93. Ojha, *Bānswara Rājya kā Itihāsa*, 1937, p. 21.
94. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
95. Ojha, *Sirohī Rājya kā Itihāsa*, pp. 33-34.
96. *PRASWC*, 1908, pp. 5 and 58 ; Ojha, *Sirohi Rājya kā Itihāsa*, p. 34.
97. Goetz, *The Art and Architecture of Bikaner State*, 1950, p. 22.
98. Ojha, *Sirohī Rājya kā Itihāsa*, pp. 25-27.
99. *Ibid.*, p. 33.
100. Lala Sita Ram, *op. cit.*, p. 48.
101. R. C. Agrawal, "Varmāṇ kā Prakhyāta Sūrya Mandir," *Varadā*, VIII (4), 1964, pp. 3-5.
102. U. P. Shah, "Some Surya Images from Saurāṣṭra, Gujarāt and Rajasthan," *Museum Bulletin (Baroda)*, XIX, 1966, pp. 47-48, fig. 29.
103. See, Pl. LII.
104. *Skanda Purāṇa*, "Śrīmāla Mahātmya," Nāgara Khaṇḍa.

105. Ojha, *Jodhpur Rājya kā Itihāsa*, Pt. I, 1938, Pt. I, p. 52.
106. *PRASWC*, 1921, pp. 116-117.
107. V. S. Srivastava, "Kota Kṣetra kā eka Anjñāta Sūrya Mandir," *Varada*, IV (4), 1963, pp. 5-12.
- ✓ 108. The temple was dedicated to the Sun-god — *Bhāsvato* at Dholpur. "Dholpur Stone Inscription of Chāhamāna Chanda Mahāsena," *DINI*, II, pp. 1058-59 ; Dasharatha Sharma, *Early Chauhan Dynasty*, p. 235. //
109. Dasharatha Sharma, "Mahārājādhirāja Simharāja Chauhāna aur Uskā Thānwale kā Abhilekha," *Varada*, V (2), 1962, pp. 3-5.

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The representation of the composite images of the divinities of the various Hindu sects was widely popular in the temples of the post-Gupta period. These images as well as the literature of the different sects are evidence of the mixed feelings of one sect towards another. The feelings of tolerance, jealousy and rivalry, eclecticism and sectarian bias are reflected in the contemporary art, literature mythological stories and epigraphs. The feeling of sectarian bias was quite natural and it was reflected more in literature than in art. Moreover, it subsisted more between Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism than among the various sects of Hinduism. The representation of the composite images was an embodiment of the feelings of harmony between the different Hindu sects. In the post-Gupta period, this liberal attitude is also reflected in the donatory grants of the rulers to the temples irrespective of their religious leanings. These sculptural and literary evidences prove the continuity of that liberal ancient tradition of India which saved it from turning into a battlefield of religious wars during the development of various religious cults.

I

Religious Tolerance and Intolerance

Religious rivalry in literature and Sculpture

Among the Hindu sects the feeling of sectarian bias and rivalry is reflected in the mythological stories and art. The Paurāṇic stories of *chakradāna*¹ by Śiva indicate a prejudice in favour of Śiva. Similarly, the Paurāṇic myth about the annihilation of Narasimha by Śarabhamūrti,² the incarnation of Śiva, indicates favour for Śaivism. On the other hand, the Brahmasīrachchhedakamūrti³ extols the greatness of Viṣṇu by calling him the redeemer of Śiva from the sin of *brahmahatya*. These myths and their sculptural representations were responsible for creating a feeling of rivalry and jealousy between Vaiṣṇavism and Śaivism.

Instances of rivalry between Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism are also found in literature and art. The Buddhists gave

vent to the feeling of animosity by carving images of Avalokiteśvara trampling Gaṇeśa and the other Brahmanic divinities. Such examples are found only in Northern India, where Buddhism was very popular.⁴

In Jaina literature and art, Hindu divinities were shown as attendants to the Jina-tīrthankara. In the Jaina iconography they are known as the *yakṣas* and *yakṣiṇīs*⁵ – the defending guardians of both the sects of the Jainas – Digambara and the Śvetāmbara. The iconography of the twenty-four *yakṣas* and *yakṣiṇīs*,⁶ and their sculptural representations prove that they were taken from the Hindu pantheon. For instance, the Jaina images of Brahma *yakṣa* of Śīṭalanātha, Garuḍa-rider Gomukha *yakṣa*, and Īśvara *yakṣa* are replicas of the images of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva respectively. Similarly, the Jaina images of *yakṣiṇīs* – Chakreśvarī, Gaurī and Kālī – are the counterparts of the Mātrikās of the Brahmanic group – Vaiṣṇavī, Māheśvarī and Kālī respectively.

In his work - *Dharmakhyānam*, Haribhadra Suri, a Jaina teacher, lampooned the Paurāṇic stories of Hindu gods and goddesses. His satire on the Paurāṇic themes through the stories of five *dharmas* is representative of the strong feelings of animosity which the Jainas had towards Hinduism. Though the Jainas criticised Hinduism, they did not hesitate in borrowing from mythological stories of the *Purāṇas*. On the other hand Hindus also gave vent to similar feelings of enmity. For instance, Rājasekhara, the court poet of Pratihāra ruler Mahāpaladeva, portrays his patron as the destroyer of the *maṭhas* of the Jainas : *haṭhavihatamaṭhaśrīḥ śrīmahāpāladevaḥ*.⁷ The *smṛiti* writers condemned any association with Jaina shrines. They even went to the extent of suggesting that one should not take asylum in the Jaina shrines – “*na śīmantaram gachchhennasmaśānam Jinālayam*.”⁸ In his drama - *Prabodhachandrodayam* (ca. 11th Century A. D.), Śrīkriṣṇa Miśra expresses a feeling of jealousy and rivalry for Jainism, Buddhism, Soma-Siddhānta, Pāśupatas and Kāpālikas.⁹

Religious Tolerance and Reconciliation

Despite these feelings of bitterness, attempts at reconciliation and rapprochement between the various rival creeds are discernible from a very early period. The effort to find unity among the diversity of various divinities could be traced to the Vedic literature : *Ekam sat vipra bahudhā vadanti*.¹⁰ The view of Banerjea and Maxmuller¹¹ that in the Vedic period this unity was due to the religious tolerance of the people can not be accepted. However, in the *Rigveda*, the concept of monotheism did not develop because of rivalry between the divinities but was a result of the absence of distinct and definite characteristics attributed to every God. On the other hand, the concept of cult syncretism was adopted to inculcate the feeling of tolerance among the followers. It was achieved through the composite images and *pañchayatana pūja*. Attempts of one sect to reconcile with the other sects, and to consider them of equal status are discernible in literature and art. The images of Harihara, Ardhanārīśvara, Harihara-Pitāmaha, Harihara-Pitāmaha-Sūrya and *pañchayatana lingas* are evident of the efforts to establish harmony between various Hindu sects.

Besides, the existence of Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Jainism as well as the building of their temples at one place shows the liberal attitude of their followers. The ancient temple-cities of Upakeśapur (Osia, Jodhpur), Pārśvanagar (Parānagar, Alwar), Chandravatī (Jhalarāpātan), Chitrakūṭa (Chittorgarh), Nāgahrida (Nagda, Udaipur), etc., are the examples of this tolerant attitude.

Moreover, the concept of monotheism and the *pañchayatana pūja* gave impetus to the growth of cult syncretism. In the *pañchayatana pūja* five emblems representing Viṣṇu, Śiva, Gaṇeśa, Sūrya and Śakti were worshipped together. Here, the sectarian importance was shown only by placing the emblem of the main deity in the centre and others at its four corners. This method of worshipping the five gods is evident from the planning of the *pañchayatana* temples of this period. In Rajasthan, the temples

of Harihara, Sachiyāmātā, and Mahāvīra at Osia (Jodhpur, ca. 8th-10th century A.D.), the Vaiṣṇava temple at Īswāl (Udaipur), Śiva temple of Nīlakaṇṭha at Parānagar (Alwar) and the Vaiṣṇava (*Sas-Bahu*) temples at Nāgdā (Udaipur) are built according to this scheme.

The *Purāṇas* have also emphasized the idea of eclecticism between the Bhāgavatas and the Pāśupatas. In the *Vāmana Purāṇa*, Śiva himself tells His *gaṇas* that if His body is cut they will find the image of Viṣṇu in his heart : *Yatnāt krakachamādāya chhindadhvaṁ mama vigrahaṁ, Tathāpi driṣyate viṣṇurmama dehe sanātana*.¹² In the same strain Viṣṇu explains to the Devas, who were searching for Śiva, the presence of Śiva in His own heart : *Athovācha surāṇviṣṇureṣa tiṣṭhati śankarah, maddehe kiṁ na paśyadhvaṁ yogaśchāyaṁ pratiṣṭhitah... tato avyayātma sa hariḥ svahritpankajasāyinaṁ darśayāmāsa devānāṁ murārilinga-maiśvaraṁ*.¹³ Similarly, the *Hariharātmaka Stotra* of the *Harivaṁśa Purāṇa* explains how the composite form of Harihara was viewed by Brahmā : *Haraṁ cha Harirūpeṇa, hariṁ cha hararūpināṁ, śankhachakragadāpāṇiṁ pītāmbaradharaṁ Haraṁ*.¹⁴ The figure of Harihara appeared to Brahmā as Śiva, holding the attributes of Viṣṇu as if Śiva has adopted the form of Viṣṇu ; and as if Viṣṇu has become Śiva. In this way, the *Purāṇas* emphasized the necessity of adopting a liberal attitude towards all the sects. They also showed this attitude towards Buddhism and Jainism by including Buddha and Rīṣabha in the galaxy of the incarnations of Viṣṇu.

Epigraphs of this period clearly mention the magnanimous attitude of the rulers. The rulers of the Vardhana, the Pratihāra, the Paramāra¹⁵ and the Chauhāna dynasties had different family deities, even then they extended patronage to all the religions. It is because of this liberal attitude that the synthesis between the Brahmanic gods reached its zenith in the post-Gupta period. The *Ādivaraha* coins and the Gwalior *Praśasti*¹⁶ tell us that Bhojadeva of the Pratihāra dynasty, who was a devotee of Bhagavatī and Viṣṇu, made a grant of some *drammas* in favour of Śrī Kāmyakeśvara, the presiding deity of the temple of Śiva at Kāmān (Bharatpur).¹⁷ The tolerance of the Chāhamāna ruler Jojalladeva

of Naḍol is indicated by his orders that the courtesans attached to the Hindu temples must also take part in the procession of the Jaina temples.¹⁸ Another Chauhāna ruler of Naḍol, Kaṭukarāja, a Śaiva devotee, made a grant on Śivarātri to a Jaina devotee, Ṭhallak, for worshipping Śāntinātha and Mahāvīra in the temple of Mahāvīra. The magnanimity and tolerance of the rulers is clearly reflected by the invocatory verse of the Sevaḍī inscription (1172 V.S.) addressed to Śāntinātha.¹⁹ Allahaṇadeva of the family of the Śākambharī Chauhānas was a devout worshipper of Śiva. After worshipping his own family deity, he distributed gifts among the Brāhmaṇas and made a grant of five *drammas* to a Jaina shrine of Mahāvīra in Naddula²⁰ in 1161 A. D. Kīrttipāladeva, the son of Allahaṇadeva was also very tolerant ruler. In his grant to a Jaina temple at Naḍlai in 1161 A.D., he has invoked the Hindu trinity as Jinas. He was himself a devout worshipper of Śiva and the Sun and even though he performed Hindu religious rites he made a grant in favour of the Jaina temple.²¹ This also shows that though the rulers were the devotees of Viṣṇu, Śiva or Śakti, they contributed liberally to the Jaina temples and also extended their patronage to other religious sects : "*Om svasti śriyai bhavantu vo devāḥ Brahmaśrīdharaśankarāḥ sadāvirāgavanto ye, Jināḥ jagati Viśrutāḥ*."²² Besides, the poet could show the supremacy of the Jina-tīrthankara over Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva by calling them the world famous *jinas* when they asked for their blessings. The word *jina* is commonly used for the Jaina Tīrthankaras but it is also used for Viṣṇu and it could be used for any one who has won over his desires : *Vītarāgo jinaḥ prokto jino nārāyaṇaḥ smritaḥ, kandarpō-api jinaśchaiva jinaḥ sāmānyakevalī*.²³ Here, the poet by punning upon the word *jina* has attempted to show the oneness among the different deities by calling them *jinas*.

These epigraphical evidences are of a later period than the composite sculptures discussed here, even then they are sufficient to show the continuity of the tolerant policy of rulers of Rajasthan during the post-Gupta period. The invocatory verses of the grants show religious leanings of the donor, while the donations made to the other sects show their tolerant attitude.

II

Sculptural Representation of cult-Syncretism

During the post-Gupta period the reconciliation and harmony between the different Hindu sects was represented in sculpture in two ways : (A) By representing the divinities of two sects in a composite image on an equal status, and (B) by representing the main deity supreme among the others in a composite form, and worshipping all of them at the same time.

(A) Representation of divinities on equal status

In the first category of the composite images the one half of the body is of the divinity of one sect and the other half of the other sect which is carved jointly on a pedestal in such a manner that a line could be drawn between them from the centre of the crown to the feet. This sort of representation showed reconciliation between the two sects and the equal status of their divinities. The composite images of (i) Harihara and (ii) Ardhanārīśvara could be cited as the best examples of this form in Rajasthan.

(i) *Image of Harihara*:—The image of Harihara presents half-Śiva and half-Viṣṇu in one sculpture. The *Purāṇas* have given detailed iconographic descriptions of these type of images. According to the *Matsya Purāṇa* the description of Harihara is as follows : *Vamārdhe mādham kuryād dakṣiṇe śulapāṇinam, śankham chakradharam śāntamāraktāṅguli-vibhramam, dakṣiṇārdhe jaṭābhāramardhendukritalakṣaṇam, bhujangahāravalayam varadam dakṣiṇam karam, dvitīyam chāpi kurvīta triśulavaradhāriṇam.*²⁴ The left half of the image belongs to Viṣṇu, hence it is shown holding the weapons, *śankha* and *chakra* ; adorned with a *kīrttimukha*, *vaijayanti* and other ornaments; with the Āyudhapuruṣas and Garuḍa as attendants. The right half of the image belonging to Śiva bears a *jaṭāmukuta*, a *sarpakundala*, animal skin and a garland of skulls. Similarly, the *Abhilaṣitartha Chintāmaṇi*²⁵ and the *Vamana Purāṇa*²⁶ give a detailed description only of the ornaments, *jaṭāmukuta*, *kīrttimukha*, weapons, clothes and complexion of the image but it does not mention the *vāhanas* of the gods. This lacuna

is rectified in the description of Hemādri. While describing the weapons of the image he points out that the image should also be represented with the vehicles of the two deities : *dakṣiṇe vṛṣabhaḥ pārśve vāmabhāge vihangarāḍiti*.²⁷

The iconographical details of the image given by Maṇḍana²⁸ show that it was very popular in Rajasthan. His description of the image is the same as that of the *Purāṇas* with the minor difference that he has also described the vehicles of Viṣṇu and Śiva.

The earliest depiction of the concept of the composite image of Harihara is discovered on a gold coin of Huviṣka, wherein he is represented holding the weapons of Viṣṇu and Śiva.²⁹ By the 7th century A.D., the concept was not confined only to the making of an image, but it was also used as a simile and as a metaphor to explain other things by the poets. The popularity of this concept is evident by its reference in literature and epigraphs. Bāṇabhaṭṭa in his *Harṣacharita* compares Bhaṇḍi with the incarnation of Harihara, as he was wearing two different *kuṇḍalas* ; one studded with *indranīla* and the other with white pearls reflecting the *prabha* of blue and white on his body : *Ekenendranīlakunḍalānśuśyāmalitena śarīrardhenetareṇa cha trikaṇṭakamuktāphalālokadhavalitena saṁpriktāvataṛamiva hariharayordarśayantam*.³⁰

Śrīharṣa refers to this form of Viṣṇu and Śiva in the *Naiṣadhacharita*.³¹ Parimala Padmagupta is so enchanted by the popularity of the concept that he describes the river, which is darkened on one side of the bank by the growth of dense *tamāla* rows and whitened through the white sand and the clear water on the other bank, as transformed into an image of Harihara : *Taṭodgataprāṇśutamālarājichchhāyā ghaṇaśyāmalitardhabhagā, mūrtistuśārāchalatulyakāntirumāpati śrīdharayorivaikā*.³²

The reference to the image of Harihara is also found in the invocatory verses of the epigraphs. The inscription of Maṇḍikīla Tal of V. S. 1043 (986 A.D.), describes the image of Harihara with Garuḍa and Nandin. It depicts half of the body of

Harihara as white, smeared with ashes, naked and holding a trident and the other half as black, smeared with saffron paste clad in yellow clothes and holding a discus : *Patām gogaṛuḍadhvajau haraharī śuklasitāṅgāvajau śulāriprahatahitau tribhuvanasyochchhedarakṣākarau, saśvadbhasma parārdhyakumkumruchī dikpīṭavastrāmbarau, saṁyatyandhaka bhaumadarpadalanau yuṣmānumāmā patī*.³³ Reference to an image of Harihara flanked by Umā and Lakṣmī has been made in an inscription of the 11th century A.D., under the name of Pradyumneśvara.³⁴ In sculpture, this description is found in an image of Harihara from the caves at Badāmī.³⁵ Here on the right and left of the image are the goddesses - Pārvatī and Lakṣmī, respectively. Between Pārvatī and Harihara is a figure of bull-faced Nandī; and between Lakṣmī and Harihara is a dwarfish figure of Garuḍa.

Depiction of Harihara in Sculpture :—The image of Harihara was very popular in Rajasthan. In this region, the earliest and most beautiful examples of this image are found in the two Vaiṣṇava temples at Osia. The principal back niche of each of them is enshrined with an image of Harihara. These sculptures are characterised by a *jaṭāmukuta*, third eye, a *triśūla* and a garland of skulls on the side of Śiva ; and a *chakra*, a *śankha*, a *kirīṭa* and a *vaijayantī* on the side of Viṣṇu. The depiction of Triśūla puruṣa and Nandī on the right side and Padma puruṣa on the left is noteworthy.³⁶ The depiction of Nandī in animal form is specially found in the composite images in Rajasthan. An image of Harihara from Rajasthan of the Pratihāra period represents Nandī in a remarkable way. The head of Nandī is depicted unusually big, and upturned looking at his lord. On its right side are represented Triśūla puruṣa and another attendant holding a skull-topped mace while on its left is shown Chakra puruṣa, Gadā devī and Garuḍa with folded hands. The sculpture is now preserved in the Heeramanek Gallery.³⁷ The images of Harihara from Nagar, Bedlā,³⁸ Buchkalā and Ābānerī³⁹ also represent Harihara in a similar form.

The image of Harihara from Bagherā (11th century A.D.), at the Rājputana Museum⁴⁰ and another at the National Museum (12th century A.D.)⁴¹ are noteworthy for representing *plīāmbara*

on the left thigh of the deity. In some of his images the skin of a lion is shown on the right thigh.⁴²

(ii) *Image of Ardhanārīśvara* :— The image of Ardhanārīśvara represents half-Śiva and half-Umā in one sculpture. This form of the composite image symbolizes the synthesis of the Śaiva and Śakta cults. This synthesis was encouraged to check the separatist tendency among the followers of these cults. In fact, the Paurāṇic story of sage Bhṛingī and his bitterness for the worship of Pārvatī⁴³ was the reason for the origin of this image which preaches the unity of these two sects.

The concept of the Ardhanārīśvara image was evolved at an early period. Its origin has been traced from the Kuṣāṇa and the Gupta coins.⁴⁴ Its popularity is clearly suggested by the references in literature, epigraphs and sculptures of the Gupta and post-Gupta periods.

The references to the image of Ardhanārīśvara date back to the 4th century A.D. Kālidāsa refers to the eternal parents of the Universe united like a word with its meaning : *vāgarthāviva sampriktau . . . Pārvatīparameśvarau*.⁴⁵ Many interesting anecdotes were imagined by the poets about this composite image. Bhāsa refers to the Ardhanārīśvara aspect as figures of speech to describe natural objects such as the evening sky : *Parva tu kāṣṭha timirānulipta sandhyarūṇābhātī cha paścimāśa, dvidhā vibhaktāntara-mantarikṣaṁ, yātyardhanārīśvara rūpaśobhaṁ*.⁴⁶ Similarly, Bhāravi refers to the composite form of Ardhanārīśvara while describing the bank of Ganges in the Himālayas. The bank of Ganges is marked with one smaller and reddish and another big foot print of Pārvatī and Śiva as Ardhanārīśvara, who perform their daily rites of worship after taking a dip in the Ganges : *Iha sanīyamayoḥ surāpagāyāmuṣasi sayāvakasavyapādarekhā, kathayati śivayoḥ śarīrayogaṁ viśamapadā padavī vivartaneṣu*.⁴⁷ The popularity of this form could be inferred from its use as a simile and other figures of speech. Bilhaṇa refers to this aspect of Pārvatī and Śiva in the opening verses of his work for seeking the blessings for its completion.⁴⁸ Rājasekhara states that on her being angry with

Gangā, Pārvatī achieved half of the body of Śiva : *ruṣyadgiriḥ vibhaktavapuṣaḥ*.⁴⁹

The epigraphs also refer to the sculptures and temples of Ardhanārīśvara. The inscription (V.S. 547) from the temple of Bhāwaramātā at Chhoti Sadri (Rajasthan) describes Pārvatī as assuming the half body of Śiva out of devotion and kindness to Him : *yā śaśīsekharasya deharddhamudvahatibhaktatayā harasya*.⁵⁰ The inscription (701 V.S.) from Khaṇḍelā (Sikar, Rajasthan) refers to a temple dedicated to Ardhanārīśvara.⁵¹ Another inscription (741 V.S.) of Dhanika from Nagar (Jaipur) refers to the image of Ardhanārīśvara being worshipped by Brahmā and Viṣṇu : *Brahmāviṣṇustutoapi prabhurapi bhajate yaḥ kadāchinṇagarvaṁ, Gaurīruddhārdhadehoapyaviṣayamanasāṁ yoagrimastāpasānām*.⁵² This was a very common feature of the iconography of Brahmanic images of the post-Gupta period. Whenever one deity was carved as the principal deity the remaining two were carved in the upper small niches in the posture of paying reverence to the former.

Among the iconographical texts, Hemādri gives a detailed description of the image of Ardhanārīśvara.⁵³ The main characteristics of such an image for the half part of Śiva are like that of Hariharamūrti viz., an *ardhvalinga*, a *sarpamekhala*, a *sarpakuṇḍala*, a *triśūla* and an *akṣasātra*. The other half of the image belonging to Pārvatī is marked by decorated *dhamilla* hairdress, *tilaka* and a garland. Her half figure could be recognized by a mirror and a lotus in her hands, feet reddened with *lakṣa* and the body decorated with ornaments and covered with clothes.⁵⁴ Moreover, the two ears of the image of Ardhanārīśvara are ornamented differently.

Sivaramamūrti states that Śiva is bi-sexual by nature, therefore, He is represented with different *kuṇḍalas* not only in the Ardhanārīśvara form but also when He is represented alone.⁵⁵ However, this view is not in accordance with the prevalent tradition of that period. While describing Mālātī in the *Harṣacharita*, Bāṇabhaṭṭa remarks that she wore different kinds of ear rings :

*Nīlīrāganihitānīlimnā . . . vāmaśravaṇāśrayiṇā dantapatreṇa . . . bakulaphalanukariṇībhīstisribhirmuktabhiḥ kalpitena bālikāyugalena . . .*⁵⁶

In the description of Dauvārika and Bhaṇḍi, he has also pointed out this fact. Dauvārika, who led Bāṇa to the court of Harṣa, wore different *kuṇḍalas* which looked like the Sun and the Moon : *Somasāryābhyāmiva śravaṇagatabhyām manikuṇḍalabhyām samudbhāsamānena*.⁵⁷ Probably, the *Kuṇḍalas* were studded with *chandrakānta* and *sāryakānta* stones. Similarly, Bhaṇḍi wore different earrings of *indranīla* and pearls in his ears : *Ekenendranīlakuṇḍalāṇsusyāmalitena śarirārdhenetareṇa cha trikaṇṭakamuktāphalalokadhavalitena saṁpriktāvataṛamiva Hariharayordarśayantam*.⁵⁸ This shows that it was a fashion for both men and women to wear different types of earrings. In the light of such descriptions it can not be accepted that different earrings of the god suggest his Ārdhanārīśvara nature. Therefore, it could be safely surmised that in the image of Śiva the carving of the *kuṇḍalas* of different patterns was not due to His bi-sexual nature, but according to the time-honoured tradition.

Sculptural representation of Ardhanārīśvara :—The iconographic and literary descriptions of Ardhanārīśvara were a challenge to the artists in achieving the ideals of male and female beauty in one sculpture. If the sculpture is viewed from the left side the smiling face and the softness of the expression of female beauty is clearly visible ; while from the right, the face is manly and pacific but hard in expression. It is not only in the representation of expression, ornaments and dress but also in the carving of neck, shoulders, pelvic portion, thighs and feet that the anatomical differences are well maintained. The oft-published sculptures of Elephanta⁵⁹ and Ellora,⁶⁰ though damaged, represent a perfect combination of male and female beauty.

Ardhanārīśvara sculptures from Rajasthan though fewer in number and smaller in size have successfully achieved the ideal. Here, the earliest Ardhanārīśvara image is found in the ruins of Chandrabhāgā⁶¹ (ca. 6th-7th century A.D.), where Śiva and Pārvatī are beautifully represented in one sculpture. It is remarkable (a) for the diaphanous drapery, soft curves of the left half of

Pārvatī and (b) for the anthropomorphic representation of Nandī, the vehicle of Śiva. It reminds one of Kālidāsa's description of the hermitage of Śiva where Nandī is conceived in human form standing at the door of the *aśrama*, resting his hand on the golden stick, and telling the *gaṇas* not to make noise : *Latāgrihadvāragatoatha nandī vāmaprakoṣṭharpita hemavetraḥ, mukhārpitaikāṅguli sanjñyaiva mā chāpalāyeti gaṇānvyanaiṣīt*.⁶² The tradition of representing Nandī in human form with two horns on the head as the *dvārapalaka* of Śiva has also been referred to in the Tamil texts of the seventh century A.D. The image of Nandī in human form is represented in many Chālukya and Rāṣṭrakūṭa temples.⁶³

Another image of Ardhanārīśvara from Ābānerī (ca. 9th century A.D.) depicts Śiva holding a *triśala* and a lotus in His hands, and shows Pārvatī holding a mirror in one hand, while keeping the other hand on her hip gracefully.⁶⁴

(B) Representation of Main deity as Supreme

The other way of establishing harmony between the different Hindu sects was by representing gods of all the five sects in one sculpture with one of them in the centre as supreme. In this form the five emblems representing Viṣṇu, Śiva, Śakti, Sūrya and Gaṇeśa were worshipped together, with one of them in the centre depending on the religious belief of the worshipper.⁶⁵ Śankarāchārya attempted to establish this synthesis by initiating the *pañchāyatana pūjā*. The idea was also adopted in the planning of the *pañchāyatana* temple where the temple of the principal deity was built in the centre and the temples of the other four deities were placed separately, one at each corner. Moreover, the concept also inspired the artists to carve such a composite icon in which Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva and Sūrya are synthesized in one sculpture. The sculptors achieved this aim by carving around one principal deity the emblems or the attributes of the other deities.

(i) *Representation of Pañchāyatana Śiva-linga* :—In places where Śaivism was very popular, the deities of the other sects were syncretized and merged into the icon of Śiva. In sculpture this

was achieved by carving the deities of the *pañchāyatana* group around the cylindrical form of the *Śiva-linga*. Sometimes the deities which are outside the pale of this group, as *Brahmā*⁶⁶ or incarnations of *Viṣṇu*,⁶⁷ are also depicted in one sculpture.

The discovery of composite *lingas* from Bharatpur and Ajmer indicates that till the 7th-8th century A.D., Śaivism was popular in this region. The lowest portion of the composite *linga* from Nānd (Ajmer)⁶⁸ depicts the images of *Viṣṇu*, goddess *Ekānāśā*, *Vāsudeva* and *Baladeva*.⁶⁹ Its second horizontal tier depicts the images of *Brahmā*, *Sūrya* and *Śiva* which are somewhat damaged while its top most portion represents four seated figures of *Lakuliṣa*. In the composite *Śiva-linga* from Kāmān (Bharatpur), the *Lakuliṣa* figures are substituted by the four heads of *Śiva*.⁷⁰ Here, around the *linga* are carved *Viṣṇu*, *Śiva*, *Brahmā* and *Sūrya* with their weapons and vehicles. Above them are represented the four heads which are somewhat defaced but could be recognized due to the presence of a third eye on all faces and tusks on one of them. The face above *Brahmā* is that of *Vāmadeva* as is evident from the feminine softness and smile. All the four faces appear similar but in expression they differ from one another. Another *Śiva-linga*⁷¹ (ca. 7th-8th century A.D.) bears on its sides the images of *Brahmā*, *Viṣṇu*, *Śiva* and *Sūrya* seated on their respective vehicles.

(ii) *Composite forms of Sūrya, Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Śiva:—*

In the regions where Sun-worship was very popular, *Sūrya* was represented in the composite images as the main deity and other gods as merging in him. Besides, *Sūrya* is also referred to as an important deity among the other gods both in the Vedic and Paurāṇic literature.

In the Vedic literature, even the hymns which are ascribed by scholars to the Henotheism are addressed to *Sūrya*. In this context the Sun-god is called – “*ekam sat viprā bahudhā vadanti*.”⁷² In the Paurāṇic literature *Sūrya* has been referred to as the supreme divinity. The *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* discusses the syncretistic figures of *Sūrya*. He is invoked as “one who is *Brahmā*, who is

Śiva, who is wind, the atmosphere and water and earth and its mountains and oceans . . . who is Brahmā's body, and Śiva's body and Viṣṇu's body."⁷³ This indicates the three fold nature of the Sun.

The *Rapamaṇḍana* describes the composite forms of many other deities such as Harihara and Harihara-Pitāmaha,⁷⁴ but it does not mention any syncretistic image where the Sun-god is represented. Similarly, other iconographic texts also do not refer to syncretism of Sun cult. Despite this, the tradition of carving the images of Sūrya-Nārāyaṇa, Mārtaṇḍa-Bhairava, Harihara-Sūrya and Harihara-Pitāmaha-Sūrya was in vogue in the post-Gupta period in Western India. This shows the popularity of cult syncretism and the high position in which Sūrya was esteemed among the other gods during the period in Rajasthan.

In the composite images of Sūrya, He is represented in *udīchyaveśa* with *kavacha* and holding two lotus flowers. His extra hands are depicted holding the attributes of Śiva — *triśala* and *sarpa*, of Viṣṇu — *chakra* and *gada*, and of Brahmā — *kamaṇḍalu* and *aṅgamāla*. Besides, the vehicles of Śiva, Brahmā and Viṣṇu and the Āyudhapuruṣas are also carved.

In these sculptures, the image is either carved with three faces or with one face. For instance, the composite image of Sūrya from the Sachiyāmātā temple at Osia⁷⁵ has three faces. When His figure is carved seated, the chariot is also sometimes carved. This is evident from the composite Sun image from the temple of Nīlakaṇṭha.⁷⁶

(a) *Harihara-Pitāmaha-Sūrya* :—The image of Harihara-Pitāmaha-Sūrya is one of the most popular syncretistic images of the Sun-god. The Sūrya temple at Raṇakpur presents a number of images where the Sun-god is syncretized with one, two or more deities at a time. Here, Sūrya is carved in a composite form alternately with almost every deity. Māgha refers to the concept of such a syncretistic form of Sūrya with Harihara while describing the personality of Śiśupāla, because he was born with four hands

like Chaturbhuja Viṣṇu and three eyes like Śiva, and in valour he was like the Sun-god : *Sa bala asīdvapuṣa chaturbhujō mukhena pūrṇendunibhastrilochanaḥ, yuvākarākrāntamahābhriduchchakaira-sanśayaṁ samprati tejasā raviḥ.*⁷⁷

Sūrya-Nārāyaṇa :—In this type of composite image of Sūrya and Viṣṇu, Sūrya is depicted as a principal deity. In some of the images of the Sūrya-Nārāyaṇa, the Śeṣaśāyī aspect of Viṣṇu is synthesized with Sūrya. An image from Chandrabhāgā⁷⁸ depicts a canopy of seven-headed serpent-hood behind the head in place of the halo. The figure represents the Sun-god, wearing boots and *kavacha*, having six arms among which two are holding lotuses - the attributes of Sūrya ; and the others a *gada*, a *chakra*, an *akṣamālā* and a *śankha* signifying Viṣṇu. Similarly, the Yoganārāyaṇa aspect of Viṣṇu has also been merged with Sūrya in the seated images of Sūrya. For instance, an image of Sūrya-Nārāyaṇa from the *Sas* temple (Nāgdā, Udaipur)⁷⁹ is represented seated in *baddha padmāsana* with two hands in the *yogamudra* and the other two carrying lotuses. The image of seated Sūrya-Nārāyaṇa from Ābānerī is represented as holding the attributes of Viṣṇu an *akṣamālā* and a *śankha* in the two lower hands.⁸⁰ In this image the boots and *kavacha* are not carved.

(c) *Mārtaṇḍa-Bhairava* :—In this type of composite image of Sūrya and Śiva,⁸¹ the Sun is depicted seated in *padmāsana*, holding a skull-crowned mace, a trident and two lotus flowers and wearing a crown and *kavacha*. It shows Sūrya as a supreme deity. This variety is known as the Mārtaṇḍa-Bhairava. The image from the *Śas*-temple at Nāgdā could be cited as an example of this type.⁸² The concept of blending Śiva and Sūrya was also represented through the motif of seven horses of Sūrya carved below the Śiva-*linga*. It is represented in the image of Mārtaṇḍa-Bhairava from Kāmān (Bharatpur).⁸³

(d) *Trimurti with Sūrya* :—The blending of the images of three divinities in Sūrya is the most popular variety among the composite images of Rajasthan. These images belong to the period between the 9th and 12th centuries A.D. In these images three

faces viz., of Brahmā, Sūrya and Śiva are carved while the fourth one is hidden at the back and is never carved. Here the heads of Brahmā and Śiva could be recognized by the matted locks, and that of Sūrya by the *kirīṭamukuta*. In this type of image, sometimes only one head of Sūrya is carved and the other deities are recognized only through the weapons held in the hand, or through the presence of vehicles. This type of images come from Udaipur,⁸⁴ Osia,⁸⁵ Parānagar (Alwar),⁸⁶ Kiraḍū,⁸⁷ Palāḍī (Jodhpur),⁸⁸ Jhālāwār⁸⁹ and Sikar.⁹⁰

In the temples of Śiva, the representation of the syncretistic icon of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva and Sūrya in the principal back niche or on the lintel of the door – frame of the sanctum indicates the influence of *tantra*. The syncretism of the cult icons of Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism, Saura and Brahmā is a means for the meditation on Sadāśiva, hence it has a special significance in the temples dedicated to Śiva, where the *linga* is enshrined in the sanctum. For instance, in the Nīlakaṇṭha temple of Śiva at Parānagar (Alwar) a black Śiva-*linga* is enshrined in the sanctum. In its back principal niche there is an image of Sūrya, which is represented seated in the chariot, holding two full blown lotuses and the attributes of Viṣṇu, Śiva and Brahmā. Similarly, in the Someśvara temple (Kiraḍū), the image of Harihara-Pitāmaha-Sūrya is carved on the upper lintel of the doorway of the sanctum as well as in the back principal niche. The back principal niches in the Śaiva temples at Dhārḍa (Kṣīreśvara temple, Bhilwara) and Bhāwal (Jodhpur)⁹¹ also enshrine the composite images of Śiva, Sūrya, Viṣṇu and Brahmā. It is also a result of *tāntric* influence. The significance of a composite image of Sūrya, Viṣṇu, Śiva and Brahmā in a Śaiva temple is explained in the *Īśāna-Śivagurudevapaddhati*. It states that the composite image of Sūrya, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva represents the Sun, the Moon and Fire because Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva are the presiding deities of the Sun, the Moon and Fire respectively. This type of image helps in the meditation of Sadāśiva and is assigned a special place in a temple of Śiva.⁹²

The study shows that though the carving of the composite images of Ardhanārīśvara and Harihara was in vogue from the Kuṣāṇa period, the idea of blending three or four divinities in one

sculpture had begun from the 10th century A. D. These images are indicators of the extent to which religious harmony and reconciliation was established between the different Hindu sects.

References

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4. *DHI*, p. 540.
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7. Rājasekhara, *Bāla Bhārata*, Haridasa Sanskrit Granthamala, 284, Chowkhamba, Varanasi, 1969, Act. I, vs. 7, p. 5.
8. *Prajāpati Smṛiti*, 95.
9. Śrīkṛṣṇa Misra, *Prabodhachandrodayam*, Vidya Bhavan Series, Chowkhamba, Varanasi, 1955, III Act.
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13. *Vāmana Purāṇa*, ch. 36, vs. 21-26.
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17. V. V. Mirashi, "Kāmān Stone Inscription," *EI*, XXIV, pp. 329-336.
18. D. R. Bhandarkar, "The Chāhamānas of Marwar - Sūdaḍī and Nāḍol Inscriptions of Jojaladeva, V. S. 1147," *EI*, XI, p. 26.

- ✓ 19. D. R. Bhandarkar, "The Chāhamānas of Marwar - Sevāḍi Stone Inscription of Kaṭukarāja, V. S. 1172," *EI*, XI, p. 30.
20. F. Kielhorn, "The Chāhamānas of Naḍḍula," *EI*, IX, p. 65.
- ✓ 21. Pt. R. K. Asopa, "Naḍol Plates of Mahārāja Kīrtipāla of V. S. 1218=A. D. 1161," *Indian Antiquary*, XL, May 1911, pp. 144-147; Kielhorn, "The Chāhamānas of Naddula", *EI*, IX, p. 67.
22. *Ibid.*, *EI*, IX, p. 67.
23. In the *Amarakośa*, Viṣṇu has been called a *jina*. In the *Anekārtha Samgraha*, Hemachandra calls Viṣṇu as "*Jinoarhadbuddha viṣṇuṣu*." The *Anekārthadhvani mañjarī*, gives the same meaning. Quoted from, Anundoram Borooah, ed., *Nānārtha Samgraha*, Reprinted by Publications Board, Assam, Gauhati, 1969.
24. *Matsya Purāṇa* describes this image as Śiva-Nārāyaṇa. Cf. *Matsya Purāṇa*, ch. 260, vs. 22-27.
25. T. A. G. Rao did not know the name of the work — *Abhilaṣitārtha Chintāmaṇi*, which was attached to the manuscript of *Śilparatna*, (*EHI*, Vol. II, pt. II, Appendix, pp. 170-171). It was identified by G. H. Khare. For details see, G. H. Khare, "Abhilaṣitārtha Chintāmaṇi and Śilparatna," *New Indian Antiquary*, I, No. 8, 1938, pp. 529-533.
26. *Vāmana Purāṇa*, ch. 36, vs. 29-30.
27. Hemādri, *Chaturvarga Chintāmaṇi*, *Vrata Khaṇḍa*, Bibliotheca Series, ch. I, p. 126.
28. *Rāpamaṇḍana*, IV, vs. 30-31, p. 161.
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30. Bāṇabhaṭṭa, *Harṣacharitaṃ*, ed., K. P. Parab, Nirnaya Sagar Press, Bombay, 1946, 7th edn., IV, p. 135.
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- ✓ 33. B. Ch. Chabra, "Maṇḍkilā Tāl Inscription V. S. 1043," *EI*, XXXIV, p. 81.
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36. See, Pl. LXVII.
37. Aschwin Lippe, *The Art of India Stone Sculpture*, Asia Society, New York City, 1962, pl. 35.
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40. Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, Ex. No. 1084.

41. Image of Harihara from Rajasthan, National Museum, New Delhi, No. 63-955; See, Pl. LXVIII.
42. Pramod Chandra, *Stone Sculpture in the Allahabad Museum*, American Institute of Indian Studies, Poona, 1970, pl. LXVII, fig. 203 a.
43. *EHI*, Vol. II, pt. I, pp. 322-323.
44. *DHI*, pp. 181-182.
45. Kalidāsa, *Raghuvamśa*, I, 1.
46. Bhāsa, *Avimārakam*, Chowkhamba Series, Varanasi, II, vs. 12, p. 53.
47. Bhāravi, *Kīrātārjunīyam*, Allahabad, 1958, V, vs. 40.
48. Bilhaṇa, *Vikramāṅkadevacharitam*, ed., by R. C. Sharma, Chowkhamba Series, Varanasi, 1960, I, vs. 4, p. I.
49. Rājasekhara, *Prachandā Pāṇḍava*, Haridas Granthamala, No. 284, Chowkhamba Series, Varanasi, 1969, p. 1, vs. 2.
50. D. C. Sircar, "Two Inscriptions of Gauri (King) — Choti Sadri Inscription V.S. 547," *EI*, XXX, pp. 121-122. The Samvat is not given in the inscription, but on palaeographic and on orthographic basis it is apparently Vikram Samvat according to D. C. Sircar.
51. *ASIAR*, 1934-35, pp. 73-74 ; *ARRMA*, 1935.
52. S. S. Guleri, "The Nagar Inscription of Dhanik," *Bhārat Kaumudī*, I, Allahabad, 1945, p. 273.
53. Hemādri, *Chaturvarga Chintāmaṇi, Vrata Khaṇḍa*, ch. I. p. 124.
54. *Matsya Purāṇa*, ch. 260, vs. 2-10.
55. C. Sivaramamurti, "Geographical and Chronological factors in Indian Iconography," *Ancient India*, No. 6, January 1950, p. 57.
56. Bāṇabhaṭṭa, *Harṣacharita*, I, p. 32.
57. *Ibid.*, II, p. 61.
58. *Ibid.*, IV, p. 135.
59. Heinrich Zimmer, *Art of Indian Asia*, Vol. II, Plates, Bollingen Series XXXIX, Pantheon Books, New York, 1955, pl. Nos. 256 and 258.
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63. V. R. Mani, *The cult of Weapons, The Āyudhapuruṣas*, Agam Kala Prakāshan, New Delhi, 1985, pp. 32-35.
64. *Marg*, III, p. 8.

65. Monier Williams, *Religious thought and Life in India*, Reprint, edn., 1974, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, pp. 411-412.
66. C. Sivaramamurti, "Composite figures in Indian Iconography," *Bhāratiya Vidyā*, Vol. X, Pt. II, 1949, pp. 296-300, figs. 2, 3 and 4 ; *DHI*, p. 545, pl. XLVI, fig. 2 and pl. XLVII, fig. 1.
67. A column probably a Śiva-linga whose upper part is broken presents four incarnations of Viṣṇu viz., Harihara, Varāha, Vāsudeva and Vāmana. It was found at Kutari (Allahabad) and is now preserved in the Allahabad Museum. Cf. Pramod Chandra, *op. cit.*, pl. 203 (a-d). Another Chaturmukha-linga found at Bulandshahr (U.P.) depicts Viṣṇu in four aspects, viz., Viṣṇu, Varāha, Hayagrīva or Kalki and Narasimha. For details see, C. Sivaramamurti, "Composite figures in Indian Iconography," *Bhāratiya Vidyā*, X, Pt. II, 1949, pp. 299-300, fig. 4 (a-b).
68. R. C. Agrawal, "A Rare Chaturmukha Śiva-linga, from Nand near Pushkar, Rajasthan," *Purātattva*, II, 1968-69, pp. 53-54 and plate.
69. The goddess is identified as Ekānāṁśā on the basis of the instructions of *Bṛihat Samhitā*. According to it Ekānāṁśā should be carved between Vāsudeva and Balarāma.
70. Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, Ex. No. 15 ; See Pl. LXIV.
71. Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, Ex. No. I (25) 16.
72. *Rigveda*, I, 164, 46 ; X, 114, 5.
73. *Markaṇḍeya Purāṇa*, ch. 109, vs. 69-71.
74. *Rāpamaṇḍan*, IV, vs. 30-33.
75. Image of Sūrya at the Sachiyāmātā temple. See, Pl. LXIX.
76. Image of Sun in the principal back niche of the Nīlakaṇṭha temple. See, Pl. XIV.
77. Māgha, *Śiṣupālavadhān*, I, vs. 70.
78. Jhālāwār Museum, Ex. No. 6 ; See illustration on Chapter VII.
79. An image of this type of Sūrya-Nārāyaṇa is also found at Varmāṇ (Sirohi). See, R. C. Agrawal, "Some Composite images from Rajasthan," *Researcher*, II, p. 18.
80. See, Pl. XLVIII.
81. *PRASWC*, 1905, p. 62.
82. See, Pl. LXXI.
83. *PRASWC*, 1919, p. 20.
84. Pratap Museum, Udaipur, No. 143, 12th century A.D.
85. It is *in situ* in one of the smaller shrines of the Sachiyāmātā temple. See, Pl. LXIX.

86. Nīlakaṇṭha temple (Alwar), See PL XIV.
87. It is carved in the door-frame of the Someśvara temple. G. H. Ojha, *Jodhpur Rājya kā Itihāsa*, p. 45.
88. R. C. Agrawal, "Some Composite Images of Rajasthan," *Researcher*, II, p. 19.
89. Jhālāwār Museum, No. 42. Here only Śiva, Sūrya and Viṣṇu are represented but not Brahmā.
90. The composite image of Sūrya, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva from the Harṣanātha temple. See, Pl. XLIV.
91. R. C. Agrawal, "Dhanḍa kā Ajñāta Mandir," *Varadā*, VIII (4), 1965, pp. 1-12.
92. *Īśāna Śivagurudevapaddhati*, III, ch. XII, 27-29. Quoted from Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*. Vol. II, pp. 373-374 ; See also, G. Sivaramamurti, "Composite figures in Indian Iconography," *Bhāratīya Vidyā*, X, Pt. II, 1949, p. 297.





The mountains are considered as the abode of the gods on the earth¹ which according to Paurāṇic beliefs comprises sacred places like lakes, rivers, pleasure-gardens, forests and springs which are loved by gods. Therefore, the Hindu temple is always conceived as a mountain. The *Bṛihat Samhitā*,² the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*³ and the *Matsya Purāṇa*⁴ also state that the presence of gods is most felt at the *tīrthas* and the *Kṣetras* and list the mountains — Meru, Mandara and Kailāśa as the first three temples. These temples are imagined as mountains not only in the texts on architecture but also in literature and in epigraphs : *Tadillatāchitrasitābhrakūṭa-tulyopamānāni grihāṇi yatra ; Kailāśatungaśikharapratimāni chānyāni abhanti dīrghavalabhīni savedakāni*.⁵

The idea of considering a temple as a mountain was perhaps the main source of inspiration for the architects and sculptors who carved the temple Kailāśa from the live rock at Ellora. This has also been referred to in an epigraph of Kṛṣṇa Rāja III. It mentions the temple of Śiva as Kailāśa and the earth as decorated by many Kailāśas : “*Śṛīkṛṣṇarājānripatiḥ śaradabhraśubhraiḥ yatkāriteśvaragrihervvasumatyaneka kailāśa sailanichiteva chiraṁ vibhāti*.”⁶ Similarly, the temple of Viṣṇu at Angkor-Thom in Cambodia is imagined as the mountain-Mandara. It is connected with land on two sides by bridges, and on its moat are carved the figures of demons and gods,⁷ holding the snake as a rope.

Since the temple is imagined as the residence of god, the places which are considered his favourite resorts are symbolically represented there. This is the reason why even rivers and pleasure-gardens found a place in temple sculpture. These symbols along with the other gods, demi-gods, and divine beings were repeatedly carved in a temple to prepare the mind of a devotee for establishing communion with the main deity.

The sanctum of a temple is dark and small. It enshrines only the main deity and its four walls are plain. In contrast, the exterior of the sanctum, the *adhiṣṭhāna*, the doorway and the pillars are studded with sculptures. On the exterior of the sanctum, the

sculptures of divinities, the *gandharvas*, the *apsaras* and the *mithunas* represent the different aspects of the main deity of the temple.

Every image in a temple, whether on its exterior or inside carries some meaning. The images manifest different aspects of god and create a reverential atmosphere for the devotee and make him feel the divine presence.

I

Carvings at the Adhisthana

The temples which are built on a higher plinth have two circumambulatories - one is round the *adhiṣṭhāna* which circumambulates the whole temple while the other is for the sanctum. Examples of these types of temples are the Sun temple at Chittor, the Vaiṣṇava temples at Osia, and the temples at Parānagar and Ābānerī. These temples generally have a portal with stairs. On both sides of the staircase at the entrance are carved images of Kubera and Gaṇeśa, signifying wealth and prosperity for the devotee.

On the elevation of the *adhiṣṭhāna*, niches are sunk into the wall. These niches are enshrined with divinities of lesser importance. In the temples of the 8th century A.D., the exterior surface of the *adhiṣṭhāna* was generally plain as is seen in the earlier Vaiṣṇava temples at Osia (Jodhpur). These temples built on a higher plinth have niches on every side of the exterior of their plinths. In these niches are installed the images of Gaṇeśa, Kubera, Buddha and other divinities. In the Kālikāmātā temple at Chittor, the plinth is carved with half lotus mouldings and the niches are studded with the images of divinities.

In the temples of the 9th century A. D., rows of the *kīrttimukhas* and rosettes began to be carved along with some plain mouldings. For example, on the *pīṭha* of the Sās temple at Nāgda,⁸ the first moulding has a row of the *kīrttimukhas*; the second one is plain and it is broken at equal distances by the figures of *gandharva* couples; the third moulding is ornamented with elephants

and *mithunas* ; and above this on the fourth moulding is carved another row of the *mithunas*.

The *pīṭhas* of the temples gradually became more and more ornamented. The scheme of decorating these mouldings had taken a definite shape by the 12th century A.D. This could be seen in the temple at Kirāḍū. Here the *pīṭha* of the Viṣṇu temple has seven mouldings out of which two are plain while the remaining ones are the *jādyakumbha*, the *kumuda*, the *grāsapaṭṭikā* (the row of *kīrttimukhas*), the *gajathara* and the *narathara*.⁹ The temples at Kirāḍū have a significant place in the study of the development of the socle carvings. They represent one of the earliest examples of carving the *gajathara* as well as the *narathara*. The beginning of the carving of these *tharas* had already begun in the later half of the 10th century A.D., as is evident from the Ambikā temple at Jagat. In some temples, the *aśvathara* was also included between the *gajathara* and the *narathara*. In the Someśvara temple at Kirāḍū *gajathara*, *aśvathara*, and *narathara* are carved above the *grāsapaṭṭikā*.¹⁰

II

Decorations on the Exterior of the Sanctum

The exterior of the sanctum is adorned with images which are carved in the superimposed niches of the three cardinal directions. The *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* names these carvings as the *pariveśa* in the context of the temple of Viṣṇu. It states that the representation in the *pariveśa* of the divinities living in the heaven lead the devotee to *sāyujya* with God Viṣṇu.¹¹ This is also true of the temples of other deities. The images in the *pariveśa* represent the various aspects of the principal deity and are flanked by *aṣṭadīpālās*,¹² *apsarasas* and *surasundarīs*.¹³ On the upper part of the *jaṅghā* cornice are generally carved long panels in continuation depicting the scenes of Kṛiṣṇa's life¹⁴ and the *gandharva-mithunas* dancing and playing musical instruments.¹⁵ These scenes depicting love and music in the pleasure-gardens are carved on the socle of the Harṣatmātā temple at Ābānerī.¹⁶ Sometimes, scenes from the life

of the local people were also represented on these friezes. For instance, a frieze of the Meera temple at Āhaḍ (Udaipur) represents scenes from the life of blacksmiths and grocers, and that of the Ambikā temple at Jagat depicts water-carriers with their *kāvaḍa*.

The exterior part of the sanctum called the *maṇḍovara* or *jaṅgha* mainly displays the sculptures of divinities, *apsarasas*, *dikpālas*, *gandharvas*, etc. It has a number of projections with offsets. The majority of the temples of Rajasthan present offsets with superimposed niches. In some of the temples of the later part of the 10th and 11th centuries A.D., two consecutive belts of divinities with their attendants are carved. In the temples at Nāgdā and Kirāḍū (Someśvara temple) two belts of divinities – one above the other – are carved.¹⁷

In Rajasthan, in the Vaiṣṇava and Sūrya temples the images depicting the main aspects of Viṣṇu or his incarnations, or the images of Sūrya-Nārāyaṇa, or only the Sun-god are represented. Similarly, different aspects of Śiva e.g., *Tripurāntaka*, *Kalyāṇa-Sundara* and *Nrittamūrti* are carved in the Śaiva temples. The temples dedicated to the female principle represent mainly the terrific and pacific aspects of the goddesses – Chāmuṇḍā, Mahiṣamardini, Lakṣmī, Sarasvatī and Durgā.

(i) Decorations of the parikara of Divinities

In the exterior of the sanctum the divinities are carved in superimposed niches with a *prabhāmaṇḍala* of a lotus halo behind the head. The reason for such elaborately carved niches could be that in this period the image was not carved in the round because it was imagined as enshrined¹⁸ in the temple either at the exterior walls of the sanctum, or the *jagati*, or the circumambulatory passages or the *śukanāsikā*. Therefore, the pattern of the decoration of the sanctum doorway was also adopted in carving these niches. Like the principal deity the frames of these niches were carved in a miniature form with door jambs decorated with *śakhās*, lintel and with a motif of *chaitya* window on the top representing the *śikhara* of the temple.

The images of divinities were carved in the niches. These niches were elaborately decorated with carvings of *ghaṭapallava*, *makara* and the *parivāra-devatās* of the same divinity. These carved niches are called *parikara* by Maṇḍana. The tradition of elaborately carved *parikara* was followed in the images of all the deities irrespective of sects. Hence Maṇḍana describes this at the end of his treatise after describing all types of the images of Viṣṇu, Śiva, Śakti and Jinas. The *parikara* consists of three parts – (i) *rathika*, (ii) *vāhikā* and (iii) *toraṇa*.¹⁹ The *rathika* is the pedestal of the niche on which the god is carved seated or standing with the *parivāra-devatās* standing on either side of him. The *vāhikā* contains the frames of the pilasters, the *śakhas*, the motifs of *gajasimha* and *vyāla* : *Vāhikā bahyapakṣe tu gosimhaiḥ samalankṛita*.²⁰ The *torāṇa* is placed above the *vāhikā*. It is made of two *makaras*, and it is sometimes topped by a *kīrttimukha* or in some cases by a miniature image of Viṣṇu or the presiding deity seated in *yogāsana*.

In the images of the 8th century A.D., the *rathika* was simple and the *āsana* of the divinity was a lotus.²¹ In them, the *vāhikā* decoration consisted of *ghaṭapallava*²² and *patraśakha*²³ motifs. In some of them, *triśākhā* or *pañchaśākhā* of *vāhikā* were carved with the motifs of diamonds, rosettes, lotus and floral designs.²⁴ The image was shown flanked by garland bearing *vidyādhara*s.

In the temples of the 9th century A.D., the *vāhikā* decorations are characterised by two simple circular pillars. Examples of this are the niches of the temples at Bādoli,²⁵ Jhalarāpaṭan²⁶ and Ābānerī²⁷. The niches of the temples of the 10th century A.D., present a *makara torāṇa* and a *kīrttimukha* or a miniature image of Yogāsana Viṣṇu or Śiva-linga flanked by *Vidyādhara*s. Above the pillars are carved the images of the other two divinities of the trinity. In some of the later images, all the ten incarnations or the *Vyūha* images, or *navagrahas*, or *Sapta Mātrikās* relating to the main divinity are carved on the *parikara*.²⁸ Among these carvings, the lotus creeper, elephants, lion motifs, men riding the *vyālas*, the *kinnaras*, the *vidyādhara*s and other

divinities were included to show the omnipresence of the principal deity over the earth, the sky and water.

(ii) **Representation of Astadikpalas**

Besides the main images enshrined in the principal niches at the three sides of the temple there are the images of the *dikpālas*—the guardian deities of the quarters. They are placed as guards facing the cardinal points.²⁹ Their representation signifies that a temple is guarded by them from evil spirits. The concept that a temple was guarded by the *dikpālas* was known in the 7th–8th centuries A.D. Bāṇa mentions that the Lord has posted the guardians of the world at the entrance of every side of the region : *Atra lokanāthena diśāṃ mukheṣu parikalpitā lokapālah*.³⁰ In the earlier temples of the 8th century A.D., the scheme of their placement strictly followed the order of the cardinal points of the temple.

Gradually, the images of *dikpālas* lost importance, and they began to be replaced by those of the *apsaras*, the *nāgas*, *śārdūlas*, etc. Even in the representation of the *dikpālas* no order and place was strictly followed in the temples of the later period. The temples of Nīlakaṇṭha (Parānagar), Ambikā (Jagat)³¹ and Iśwāl (Udaipur)³² represent only one or two of the eight *dikpālas*.

(iii) **Apsaras**

The tradition of representing the figures of the *apsaras* along with the other divinities on the pillars and *maṇḍovara* began in the 9th century A.D., and it continued in the later period. This was a unique feature of the temples of Western India. The figures of the *apsaras* standing in various postures on the lotus flowers are carved on the pillars in the temples at Bāḍolī (ca. 9th century A.D.) and Nīlakaṇṭha (Parānagar, ca. 10th century A.D.).³³ They are beautifully carved on the *maṇḍovara* flanking the images of divinities in the temples of Harṣanātha (Sikar, ca. 10th century A.D.), Ambikā (Jagat),³⁴ Meera (Āhad) and Sun (Tūsa-Maṇḍesar).³⁵ Above them are represented the figures of the *gandharva* couples.

The pairs of the *vyāla* figures of varied sort flanking the *apsaras*³⁶ are also carved. Though the *apsaras* are represented in the mode of dancing and flying, they are not carved with wings. The movement of flying is conveyed by carving the curves of their garments and body. Even though they convey the movement and rhythm of dance their images appear as standing still. The *Samarāṅga Sūtradhāra*³⁷ states that the purpose of carving these images is to decorate the temple and to attract and guide the devotees to the sanctum of the temple.³⁸

(iv) The *gandharvas*

The *gandharva* figures are carved on the cornice friezes — the upper portions of the principal niches,³⁹ and on the pillar brackets of the temples. In the step-well at Osia, they are carved playing musical instruments and dallying with their consorts atop the pillar brackets. Their presence provides a worldly atmosphere to the spirituality of the temples. In the representation of the divine in plastic form, they are superb and sometimes they even surpass the representation of the main divinities. In the temples of Western India of the 10th century A.D., they occupy small superimposed niches in friezes on the top of the *jaṅghā* section of the wall. On the lower part of the *jaṅghā* are represented the important deities.

III

Decorations of the Doorframe

The door of the sanctum is carved in proportion to the main image so as to serve the purpose of a frame.⁴⁰ It consists of (i) door jambs (*dvāraśākha*), (ii) threshold and (iii) lintel (*uttaranga*).

(i) Door jambs

The door jambs of the temple consist of many *śākhās*. The *śākhās* consist of projecting images of auspicious birds, trees, *pūrṇa kumbha*, amorous couples in small niches, floriated scrolls and dwarfish figures.⁴¹ The *Matsya Purāṇa* refers to the decorations

of the door jambs in a more explicit manner. It states that the pilasters should be carved with the *patravallī*, elephants, lions and *vyāla* motifs.⁴²

On the lower portions of the door jambs are carved the images of attendants (*dvārapālas*) and the rivers. The *Rāpamaṇḍana*⁴³ mentions the *dvārapālas* of every deity along with their attributes. They are easily identifiable as they are depicted with some of the attributes of the principal deity. In the temples from the 8th to 10th centuries A.D., the scheme of representing these figures varies in details but in most of them the figures of attendants and rivers are invariably depicted.

In the earlier temples, the door jambs consisted of three simple *śakhās*, the number of which increased from three to seven and nine between the 8th and 11th centuries. So also, the intricate carving of the *śakhās*, viz., *nāgavallī*, *phullavallī*,⁴⁴ *kāmavallī*,⁴⁵ *rūpaśakhā*, and the figures in superimposed panels were added during the period. Thus in Rajasthan, the study of the development of the door jambs of the earliest extant temples to the 10th century A.D., shows that with the additions of the intricately carved *śakhās*, the older tradition of the simple *śakhās* also continued side by side.

Door jambs of the Gupta period :—Among the earliest temples in Rajasthan, the two small temples of the Gupta period at Chittorgarh could be cited as examples of the door jambs representing three *śakhās*, two of which are floriated *patraśakhās* and the third one is carved with small niches enshrining the seated images of the divinities.⁴⁶ On the lower part of the door jambs are the figures of the rivers Gangā and Yamunā each of them holding a *kumbha* and standing in *tribhanga*. Besides, a female attendant, a male attendant, and the *dvārapālas* of Viṣṇu – Śaṁkha-puruṣa and Chakra-puruṣa — are also carved there. These figures indicate that these temples at Chittorgarh must have been dedicated to Viṣṇu. The carving of the figures is plain and simple but still they have a soft and lively expressions.

Door jambs of the post-Gupta period :-In the temples of the post-Gupta period in Rajasthan, the process of the development of the door-frames could be seen in the temples at Osia, Śiva temple at Bādoli and temples at Chandrāvati (Jhālarāpāṭan).

Osia :-In the temple complex at Osia is found the addition of one more *śakhā* of the *nāgavallī* of the door-frames. The intricate coils of the *nāgas* and their figures with folded hands are carved on the second moulding⁴⁷ from the inner side, and the pattern is continued over the lintel. The temples at Osia and other places belonging to the Pratihāra period are examples of beautifully carved *nāgavallis*. Besides, the *rāpaśakhā* of these temples consists of standing *gandharva-mithuna* in the niches. On the lower part of the door jambs are carved the river-goddesses each with one male attendant not holding any attribute, except a lotus flower.

Bādoli :-At Bādoli, a broken door-frame of a temple, which is lying there on the ground is more significant for the study of fineness and intricate carving than the door-frame of the main temple. The latter door-frame⁴⁸ has plain *śakhās* with figures of rivers and *dvārapālas* of Śiva on its lower portions and on its lintel is carved Śiva-Naṭarāja flanked by the images of Viṣṇu and Brahmā. On the other hand, the broken door-frame⁴⁹ presents two *patraśakhās* and three *rāpaśakhās*, two of them depicting male and female figures while the third one presents human figures riding on the *śardūlas*. Here the images of rivers and the *dvārapālas* suggest the movement and ripple of the water. They could be cited as superb examples of the carvings in the door-frames of the temples in Rajasthan.

Chandrāvati :-The identical door-frames of the two small temples⁵⁰ at Chandrāvati (Jhālarāpāṭan) are not only glaring examples of the beautiful sculptures but also show a further development in fineness and intricate carvings over the broken door-frame of the temple at Bādoli. They are adorned with the *patraśakhā*, the *rāpaśakha*, the *phullavallī* with the figures of *ganās* between every scroll, and with fighting-figures one above the other.

They have seven *śakhas* with the figures of Kubera, *dvarapālas* of Śiva and the river goddesses. Here the vehicles of the river goddesses could be seen losing importance as they are carved only as cognizances. These door-frames show an increase in size and height as does the broken door-frame of the temple at Bādoli.

In the 10th century A.D., the addition of *rūpaśākhā* is specially noticeable in the door jambs of the temples at Nāgdā and Jagat. The former presents small figures of the incarnations of Viṣṇu⁵¹ and the latter depicts the figures of Mātrikās. Generally in the Vaiṣṇava temples twenty-four forms of Viṣṇu or his ten incarnations were carved in the niches of the *rūpaśākhā*. For instance, a fragment of a door jamb depicting the images of twenty-four forms of Viṣṇu from a Vaiṣṇava temple at Bagherā is now preserved in the Rajputana Museum.⁵² Similarly, in the Śaiva and Śakta temples, the figures of Mātrikās and Bhairava were depicted in the small niches of the doorway. For example, in the doorway of the *nāṭyamandapa* of Ambikā temple, Jagat, figures of Mātrikās are carved in the small niches of the *rūpaśākhā*.

River goddesses on door jambs :—The rivers Gangā and Yamunā were represented in human form on the door jambs of the temples of North India. The *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*⁵³ also prescribes that the front of the temples should be decorated with their images. The purpose of carving the river goddesses in human form at the door of the sanctum was to attract the gods to reside in the temple as rivers are among their favourite resorts.⁵⁴ Apart from this, their presence near the sanctum indicates the sacredness of the place. Moreover, it also purifies the devotee, who enters the doorway of the sanctum to worship the main divinity. Kālidāsa expresses, this feeling by stating that the very sight, a dip in or a sip of the water of these holy rivers is said to cleanse the person of all sins.⁵⁵

The concept of the river as a goddess is rooted in the *Rigveda*,⁵⁶ where the seven streams are addressed as *nadī-devatā*, but it evolved into the human form as holding a *pūrṇaghaṭa* and standing on *makara* in the Gupta period. This could be substantiated both from literature and sculpture. Kālidāsa makes a

reference to the anthropomorphic form of the rivers, Gangā and Yamunā, while describing the marriage of Śiva and Pārvatī.⁵⁷ Their figures are described holding fly-whisks while attending upon the God at the time of their marriage. Parimala Padmagupta describes the rivers, Narmadā and Gangā, coming out of river in human form.⁵⁸ This evidence is enough to suggest that the idea of rivers taking the human form was prevalent in the Gupta period.

Scholars have expressed different views about the evolution of the images of rivers in the anthropomorphic form. Grunwedel⁵⁹ emphasises the derivation of the images of rivers from the *nāginī* or *matsyakanyā* figures, which represent the water spirits. These are depicted in human or in half human and half serpent or fish form. According to him the representation of rivers and *apsarasas* is similar because both of them represent the water spirits. This conjecture appears to be based on the origin of the word *apsaras*. The word *apsaras* is derived from *apas* and *sri* denoting one who moves or walks in the water or the females who reside in the waters. To establish similarity between the images of rivers and *apsarasas* on this basis is not correct because they are not represented in a similar manner in sculpture. Secondly, in the iconographic texts also the *apsarasas* have not been assigned any definite iconographic traits as have the images of Gangā and Yamunā.

On the basis of the similarity in the beautiful carving, posture and place of representation of the images of *apsarasas* and the rivers, Banerjea also states that they have served as prototypes⁶⁰ for the conception of the images of Gangā and Yamunā. He refers to the inscribed images of the *apsarasas* - Miśrakeśī, Subhadra, Alambuṣā and Padmāvatī from the reliefs of Bhārhut as the source of inspiration for the carving of the images of Gangā and Yamunā.⁶¹ This view also can not be accepted because these images are static in expression. Besides, they are not depicted in a dancing pose, showing the rhythm and movement of water in their body like the images of the rivers. Moreover, the images of rivers are always represented with a *paṇnaghata* and standing on their

vehicles. Contrary to this, no uniformity is followed in the representation of the figures of *apsarasas*. They are represented sometimes as dancing, sometimes as playing musical instruments or fondling their pet animals and in postures of *alaskanyas*, *sadyasnātās* or *prasādhikās*. Therefore, they could not be considered as the prototypes of the images of Gangā and Yamunā.

The view of Coomaraswamy that the evolution of the images of Gangā and Yamunā could be traced to the *śalabhanjika-yakṣī*⁶² type of figures seems more convincing. The figures of *śalabhanjika-Yakṣī* were carved under the tree in *tribhanga* postures, and served the purpose of supporting the architraves or lintel. Sometimes, they were also shown standing on a *makara*. They resemble the images of Gangā and Yamunā in their posture as well as in the purpose and place of their representation. The carving of the figures of Gangā and Yamunā as the architectural brackets on the lintel level of the doorway was similar to the *śalabhanjika* of Sāncī. In the Amarāvati relief, a *yakṣī* standing on a *makara* resembles the image of Gangā of the later period. Similarly, the doorways of Ajanta⁶³ and Bagh⁶⁴ depict female figures standing on *makara*. The twin female figures of Ajanta standing on a *makara* below a tree laden with fruits can not justifiably be identified as Gangā and Yamunā. On the basis of iconographic characteristic, they could very well be identified as *Yakṣī* and not as Gangā and Yamunā. This was the preceding stage in the development of the iconography of the Rivers. Gradually these figures began to be differentiated on the basis of their vehicles - the *makara* and the *kachchhapa* as Gangā and Yamunā respectively. The manner of their standing under a tree like a *śalabhanjika* was still retained. Finally, in view of their position and function they were transferred to the ground level at the door jambs as attendants to the main divinity. These river-goddesses could be identified on the basis of the inscription⁶⁵ and the inscribed images of Śrī Jāhnavī and Śrī Yamunā⁶⁶ at Bherāghaṭ. The *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* describes the river-goddesses - Gangā and Yamunā - as attendants⁶⁷ of Varuṇa, riding on a *makara* and a

kachchhapa respectively.⁶⁷ These similarities among them made one accept that the carving of the images of Gangā and Yamunā was inspired by the *Śalabhanjika* which are *Yakṣiṇī* figures.

The development of the representation of the images of Gangā and Yamunā can be clearly seen in the door jambs of the temples of the Gupta period to that of the post-Gupta period.

The door jambs of the Śiva temple at Bhūmarā⁶⁸ of the Gupta period depict the images of Gangā and Yamunā on their vehicles. Each of them is accompanied by a female attendant and a male attendant standing behind them. The former is holding a tray in her hand and the latter an umbrella. Besides, a *gandharva* is shown flying in the air to the right of the head of the goddesses. Examples are also found of carving the images of these rivers in life-size at the doorways of the temples of the Gupta period. For instance, the terracotta images of the temple at Ahichhatra⁶⁹ now preserved in the National Museum, New Delhi, are carved beautifully in life-size.

In the temples of Rajasthan, the depiction of these river goddesses is of a similar pattern. In the early temples of the 7th and 8th centuries A.D., their images are bigger in size and round in carving, beautiful and expressive in the representation. The flow and rhythm of water is depicted through their postures, the floriated tails of a *makara* and a *kachchhapa* and through a *patralata* which is held in the hands of Gangā and Yamunā. For instance, the images of Gangā and Yamunā in the two Gupta temples⁷⁰ and the Sun temple (ca. 8th century A.D.) at Chittorgarh are bigger in size. Their images at the doorways of the temples at Osia,⁷¹ and at the aforesaid temples at Baḍoli⁷² depict movement through the *tribhanga* and the tails of the *makara* and *kachchhapa* going upwards in consonance with the rhythm and bend of the body. In all these examples, the *kachchhapa* is also depicted with a floriated tail to give balance and movement to the figures.

The tradition of the Gupta period of carving bigger or life-size images of Gangā and Yamunā with rhythm in their bodies

and riding their vehicles was not continued throughout the post-Gupta period. The changes in their representation become notable in the 10th century A.D. For instance, the images found are diminutive in size, their vehicles are carved only as cognizances and not as vehicles. They are carved very small on one side of the feet of the goddesses and not below their feet. For instance, in the temples at Nāgdā, Jagat, etc., in Rajasthan the *makara* and the *kachchhapa* are carved on one side of the feet of the river goddesses, Gangā and Yamunā respectively. Even the beautifully carved doorway of the temples at Chandrāvati depict these goddesses without any movement or rhythm.

(ii) Threshold

On the threshold of the door-frame is represented a long stemmed full blown lotus with coils of its leaves on either side of the stem,⁷³ two *kīrttimukhas*, *śankha* and *padma* and other attributes of the main deity. The full blown long stemmed lotus symbolizes the universe upon which the divinity is established. It also symbolizes the state of *vairāgya*⁷⁴ of the devotee in which the god is revealed to him. The *kīrttimukhas* are carved to ward off an evil eye.

The tradition of the Gupta period of carving both *śankha* and *padma* in their natural or human form on the threshold of the doorways of the houses and temples continued in the post-Gupta period. This tradition is referred to by Kālidāsa.⁷⁵ The *Yakṣa* of Meghadūta while describing his house in *Alakā*, tells the cloud that on the door of his house are carved images of *śankha* and *padma*. According to the *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*,⁷⁶ *śankha* and *padma* should be placed in front of the temple but it leaves it to the discretion of the artist to select the form - human or natural. Examples of the continuity of this tradition can be cited from the temples of the post-Gupta period of Rajasthan. For instance, the temples at Osia depict the *śankha* and *padma* in their natural form while those of Chittorgarh represent them in human form. The thresholds of the temples of the later period were begun to be

carved with images of gods and goddesses as found in the temples at Jagat and Nāgdā.

(iii) The Lintel

The pattern of carving on the *śakhas* also continues on the horizontal upper side of the door-frame, known as the lintel. The lintel represents the celestial region. In its centre, known as *lalāṭabimba*, is carved the image of the main divinity. The *lalāṭabimba* is one of the deciding factors in recognizing the divinity to whom the temple is dedicated. On both its sides, other gods of the triad and sometimes Kārttikeya and Gaṇeśa are also carved along with the Brahmanical triad. Above the dedicatory block are the friezes on which are carved the nine planets, the Sapta Mātrikās, *gandharvas*, and the incarnations of Viṣṇu.⁷⁷ The order and selection of these friezes vary from one temple to another.

In the temples of the 10th-11th centuries A.D., the image of Gaṇeśa replaces the figure of the main deity on the *lalāṭabimba* irrespective of the consideration to whom the temple is dedicated. The lintels of the Ambikā temple at Jagat, Śiva temple at Harṣanātha, and the Vaiṣṇava temple at Īswāl, depict the image of Gaṇeśa and not that of the main deity of the temple.

The pillars of the *maṇḍapa* and its side parapet walls and ceiling are full of carving.⁷⁸ On the pillars are mainly carved the *apsarasas* and the motifs of the *ghaṭapallava*, the *parṇa kumbha* and the *kīrttimukha*. The ceiling is carved with intricate designs of serpent coils or four figures arranged in the manner that every figure merges in the same head. Sometimes circular designs are also carved in the ceiling.

The pillars and the brackets of the *maṇḍapa* also depict images of the *apsarasas* and the Mātrikās. In the temples of the 11th and 12th centuries A.D., architecture began to dominate sculpture. The theme of the Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva sects were given space according to the need of architecture. As a result of this,

in the temples of this period as in the temples of Nāgda, Kīrādū, etc., the octagonal pillars and other architectural members are decorated with the sculptures of the Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva themes. The sculptor was provided limited space to carve the images. Consequently, the images become stereotyped and less expressive.

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1. *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, III, ch. 94, vs. 27-30.
2. *Bṛihat Saṃhitā*, ch. LVI, vs. 2-8, 17.
3. *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, I, ch. 130, vs. 11-16.
4. *Matsya Purāṇa*, ch. 269, vs. 28-30.
5. J. F. Fleet, "Mandasor Stone Inscription of Kumar Gupta and Bandhuvarman, the Malava Years 497 and 529," *CII*, Vol. III, pp. 79-88, Line 6.
6. R. G. Bhandarkar, "Kārhād Plates of Krishna III, Śaka Samvat 880," *EI*, IV, pp. 278-290, vs. 10.
7. C. Sivaramamurti, *Sanskrit Literature and Art - Mirror of Indian Culture*, M.A.S.I., No. 73, 1971, New Delhi, p. 8.
8. See, Pl. LIX.
9. M. A. Dhaky, "Kīrādū and the Maru Gurjara Style of Temple Architecture," *Bulletin of American Academy*, Banaras, 1961, p. 6 ; See, Pl. LXX.
10. Dhaky, *op. cit.*, p. 6.
11. *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, III, ch. 87, vs. 45.
12. Harihara temple, Osia. See, Pls. IV and LXXII.
13. Ambikā temple, Jagat (Udaipur). See, Pls. V and LI.
14. In the Vaiṣṇava temples at Osia, the life of Lord Kṛiṣṇa is depicted in sequence. See, Pl. IV.
15. Ambikā temple, Jagat (Udaipur). See, Pl. V.
16. See, Pl. VIII.
17. Sās temple at Nāgda. See, Pl. XLIII.
18. N. P. Joshi, "Madhya Kālīna Viṣṇu Mūrtiyon se Sambandhita Kuchha Śabda," *Bulletin of Museums and Archaeology in U. P.*, Nos. 5-6, 1970, pp. 42-46.
19. *Rāpamaṇḍana*, VI, vs. 33-39.

20. *Rāpamaṇḍana*, VI, vs. 36.
21. Niches of the Harihara temples at Osia and Kālikāmātā temple, Chittorgarh. See, Pls. LXVII and XXXIII.
22. Images from the Kālikāmātā temple at Chittorgarh and Harṣatmātā temple, Ābānerī. See, Pls. XV and LVII.
23. Niches of the Harihara temples at Osia. See, Pls. XXII and LXVII.
24. Niches of the temples of Sun at Osia. See, Pls. LIII and LX.
25. See, Pl. XXXVII.
26. See, Pl. XX.
27. See, Pl. IX.
28. Prabhāvalī-Detail of an Image of Viṣṇu from Īswāl. See, Pl. XX.
29. *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, III, ch. 86, vs. 46 and 52.
30. Bāṇabhaṭṭa, *Harṣa Charita*, III, p. 91.
31. See, Pl. V.
32. See, Pl. LXXII.
33. See, Pl. XIII.
34. See, Pl. V.
35. See, Pls. LVI and LXV.
36. See, Pls. V and LXV.
37. *Samarāṅgaṇa Sātradhāra*, Gaekwad Oriental Series, 2nd edn., 1966, ch. LVII, p. 404.
38. Stella Kramrisch, *The Hindu Temple*, Vol. II, University of Calcutta, 1946, p. 338.
39. Ambikā Temple, Jagat (Udaipur). See, Pl. V.
40. *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, III, 88, vs. 5.
41. It is called the *phullavallī* in which dwarfish figures are carved with a scroll issuing from their mouth.
42. *Matsya Purāṇa*, ch. 258, vs. 13-15.
43. *Rāpamaṇḍana*, II, 13-17 ; *Rāpamaṇḍana*, III, 65-70 ; *Rāpamaṇḍana*, IV, 102-107.
44. *Nāgavallī* is an intricate design of the coils of the serpents with their heads and folded hands on the corner of the horizontal branch making a row of the design.

45. *Kāmavallī* depicts amorous couples between the foliage pattern.
46. The door jamb of the Gupta temple at Chittorgarh. See, Pl. LXXVI.
47. See, Pls. I and LXIII.
48. See, Pl. LXXIV.
49. See, Pl. LXVI.
50. See, Pl. LXXIII.
51. The door jamb of the Śās temple at Nāgdā. See, Pl. LXXV.
52. Rajputana Museum, Ajmer, Ex. No. 362. See, Pl. XVI.
53. *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, III, ch. 86, vs. 69.
54. *Ibid.*, III, ch. 94, vs. 27-30.
55. Kālidāsa, *Kumārasambhavam*, X, vs. 45.
56. *Rigveda*, X, 75.
57. Kālidāsa, *Kumārasambhavam*, III, vs. 42.
58. Parimala Padmagupta, *Navasāhasāṅkacharita*, VIII, vs. 67-70 and XIV, 79.
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60. *DHI*, pp. 353-354.
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70. The door-frames of the Gupta temple and Sun temple at Chittorgarh. See, Pls. LXXVI and LXIII.
71. See, Pls. I and LXIII.
72. The broken door jamb of the temple at Bāḍolī. See, Pl. LXVI. The doorway of the main temple at Bāḍolī. See, Pl. LXXIV.
73. The doorway of the main temple at Bāḍolī. See, Pl. LXXIV.
74. *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, III, ch. 48, vs. 16.
75. Kālidāsa, *Meghadūta*, II, 20.
76. *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, III, ch. 86, vs. 70.
77. Broken lintel at Bāḍolī. See, Pl. XL.
78. Sās temple at Nāgdā. See, Pl. LIX.



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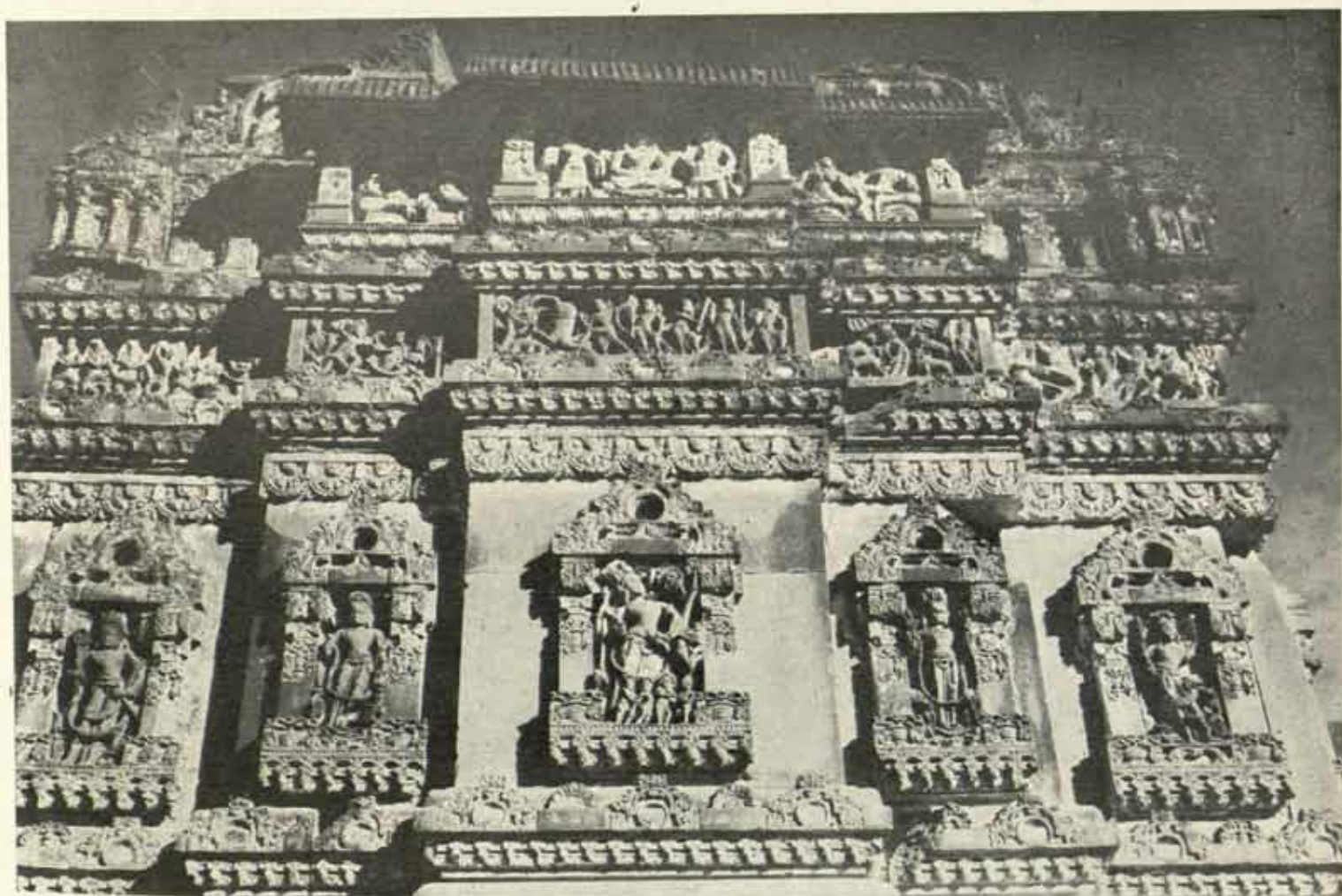
I Doorframe of the Sun temple, Osia.



II Seated Sūrya, Kalikāmātā temple, Chittorgarh.

III Matsyāvatāra of Viṣṇu, Āhad Museum, Udaipur.





IV Full view of the exterior wall of the sanctum (jañghā) showing Trivikrama and other deities and Kṛiṣṇa Līlā scenes.



V Panel showing *Apsarasas*, *gandharvas*, etc., Ambikā temple, Jagat, Udaipur.



VI Nrittadakṣiṇāmūrti, Vaiṣṇava temple, Jhālarāpāṭan.



VII Carvings of the Śukanāśa of the sikhara of a temple, Menāl.



VIII Panel carved in the *jagatī*, Harṣatmātā temple Ābānerī



IX Architectural Fragment showing the fight between the goddesses and the army of Mahiṣāsurā, Harṣatmātā temple, Ābānerī.



X *Pārvatī* doing *pañcāgni tapa*, Harṣanātha temple, Sikar.
The image is inscribed as *Vikāṭā*.



XII Pāṇḍava brother,
Harṣanātha, temple, Sikar.



XI Vaināyaki, Bhairuji temple, Harṣanātha, Sikar.



XIII Pillar showing *Apsarasas*, Nīlakaṇṭha temple,
Parānagar Alwar.



XIV Syncretistic Image of Sūrya, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva,
Nīlakaṇṭha temple, Parānagar, Alwar.



XV Kūrmāvatēra, Kālikāmātā temple, Chittorgarh.



XVII Varāha, Jhālāwār Museum.



XVI Fragment of the Door jamb showing vyūhas of Viṣṇu, Bagherā. Rajputana Museum, Ajmer.



XVIII Varāha, Nīlakaṇṭha temple Parānagar,
Alwar.



XIX Details of Prabhāvalī of Viṣṇu Image, Īswāl.



XX Narasimha, Vaiṣṇava temple,
Jhālarāpāṭan.



XXI Vāman, Rajasthan Government Central Museum, Jaipur.



XXII Trivikrama Incarnation of Viṣṇu, Harihara temple, Osia.



XXIII Kāliyadaman, Harihara temple, Osia.



XXIV Vaikunthamūrti, Jhalāwār Museum.



XXV Govardhanadhārṇa, Harihara temple, Osia.



XXVI Yogāsana Viṣṇu, Sirohi, Rajputana Museum.



XXIX Yogāsana Viṣṇu, Dīdwānā,
Sardar Museum, Jodhpur.



XXVII Kuvalayāpīḍa vadha, Harihara temple, Osia.



XXVIII Śeṣaśayī Viṣṇu, Baḍolī, Government Museum, Kota.

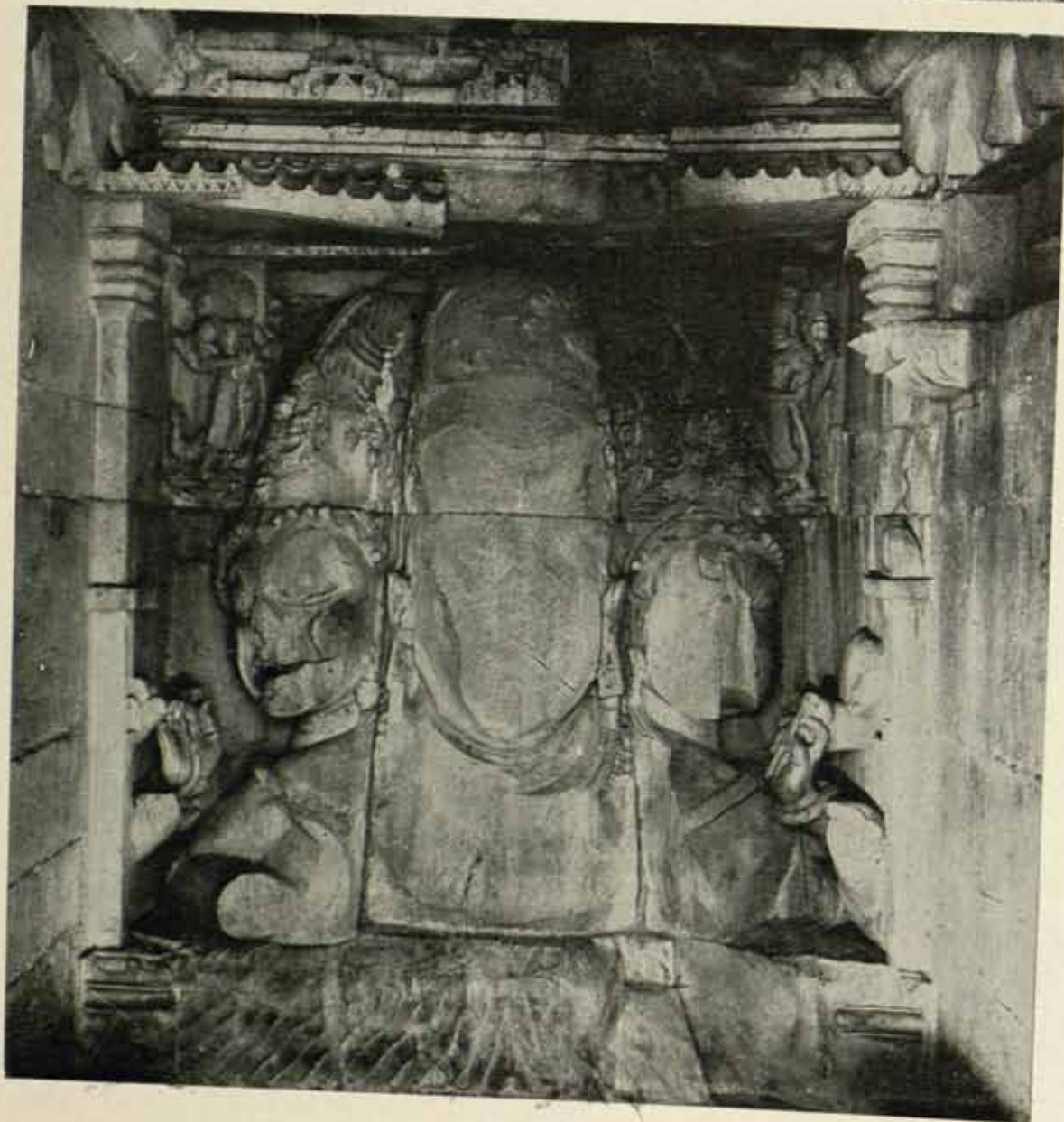


XXX Yogīśvara Viṣṇu, Harihara temple, Osia.

XXXI Viṣṇu showing the Āyudha puruṣas,
Sardar Museum, Jodhpur.



XXXII Maheśamūrti, Bādolī.





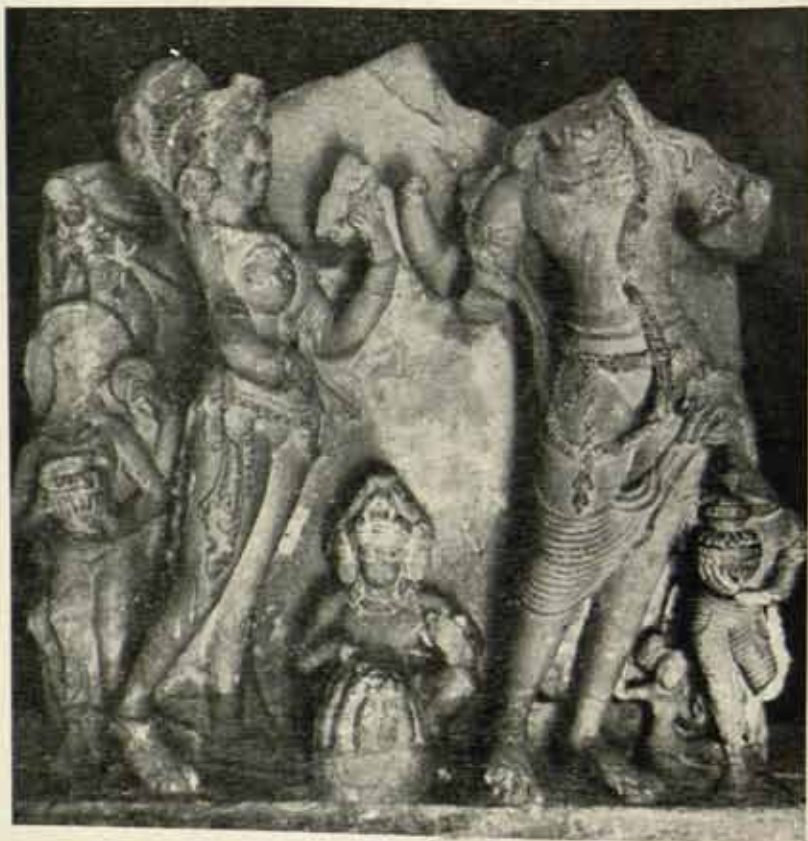
XXXIII Umā Māheśvara, Kalikāmātā temple, Chittorgarh.



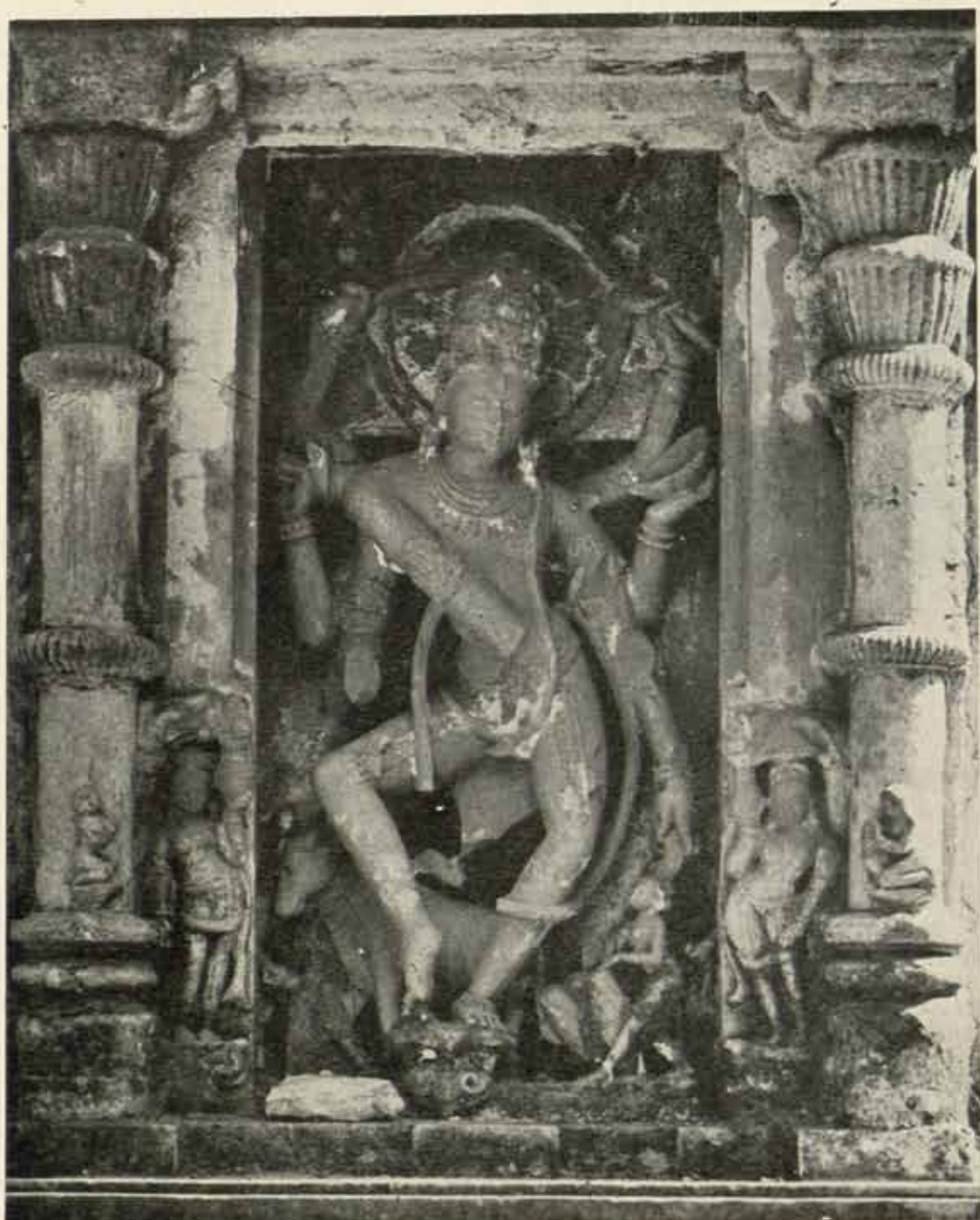
XXXIV Umā Māheśvara, Sās temple,
Nāgdā (Udaipur).



XXXV Lingodbhavamūrti from
Harṣanātha, Sikar.



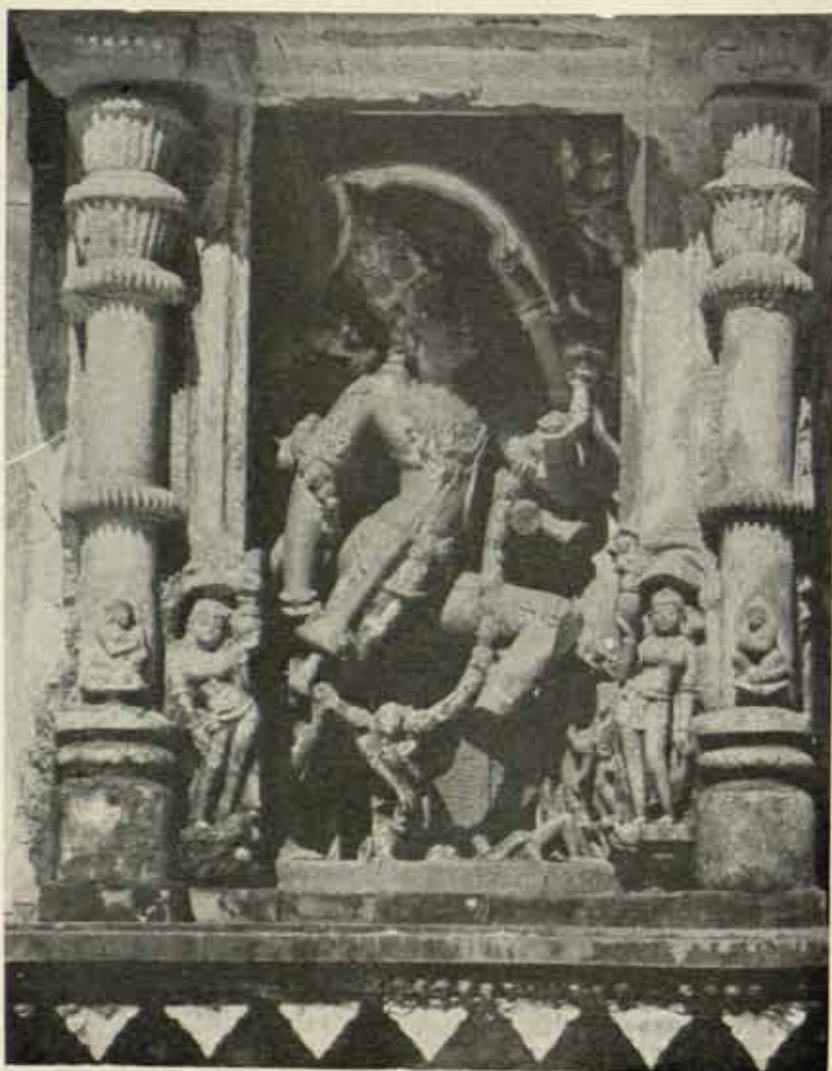
XXXVI Kalyāṇa - sundara Mūrti, Kāmān,
Bharatpur, Rajputana Museum, Ajmer.



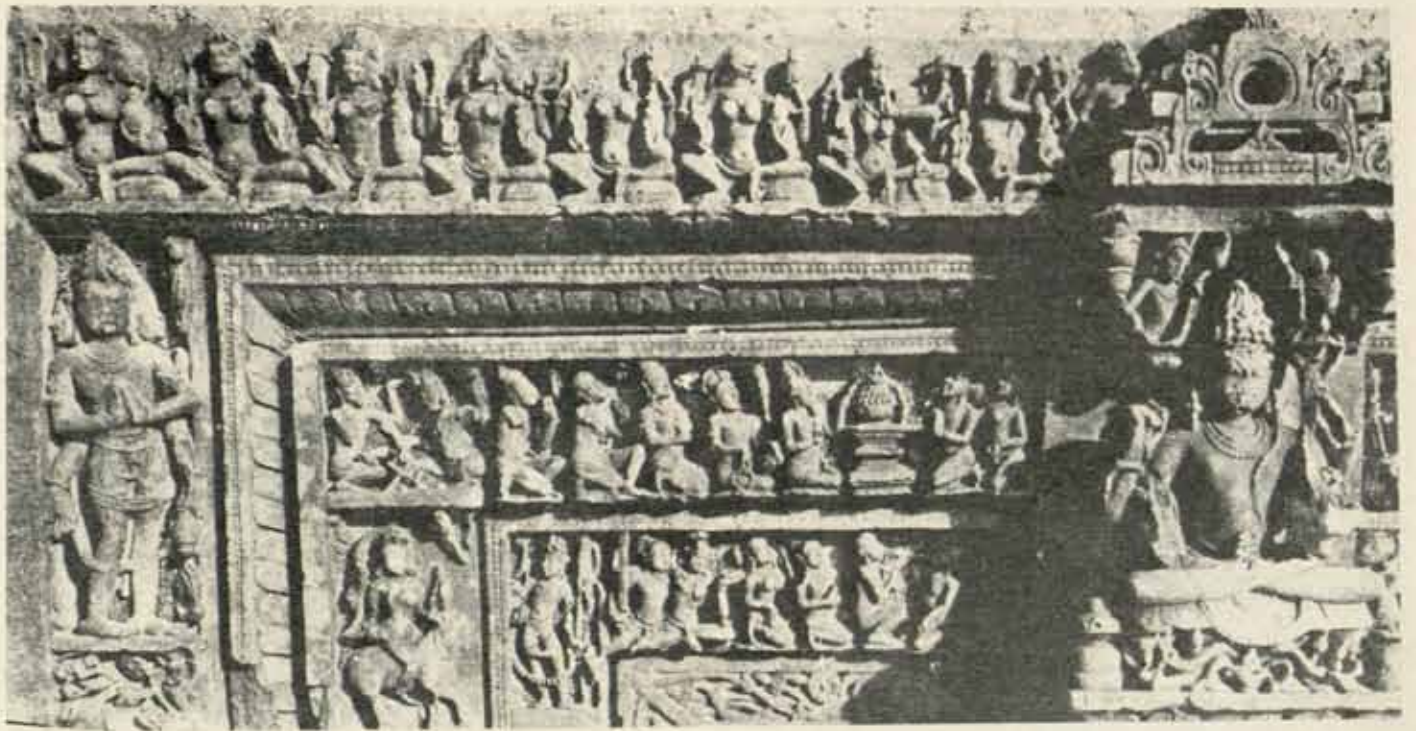
XXXVII Natarāja, Ghāṭeśvara temple, Bādolī.



XXXVIII Tripurāntaka Śiva, Nīlakaṇṭha temple,
Parānagar, Alwar.



XXXIX Tripurāntaka Śiva, Ghāṭeśvara temple,
Baḍolī.



XL Lintel showing figure of Lakulīśa on the Lalāṭabimba, Bādoli.



XLI Fragment of an Image of Mahiṣamardini, Baghera, Rajputana Museum, Ajmer.



XLII Lakulīṣa Arthūṇa, Rajputana
← Museum Ajmer.



XLIV Composite Image of Harihara-Pitāmaha-Sūrya,
Harṣanātha, Sikar.



XLIII Yogīśvara Lakulīṣa. Sās temple,
Nāgdā.



XLV Fragment of an Image of Mahiṣamardiniḥ inscribed as Sachchikā from Rewāḍā, Sardar Museum, Jodhpur.



XLVI Mahiṣamardiniḥ,
Bādoli.



XLVII Mahiṣamardini, Navadurgā temple, Chandrabhāgā,
Jhālarāpāṭan.



XLVIII Sūrya Nārāyaṇa, Ābānerī,
Rajasthan Government
Central Museum, Jaipur.



XLIX Mahiṣamardini, Ambikā temple, Jagat, Udaipur.



L Image of Chāmunda, Bādoli.



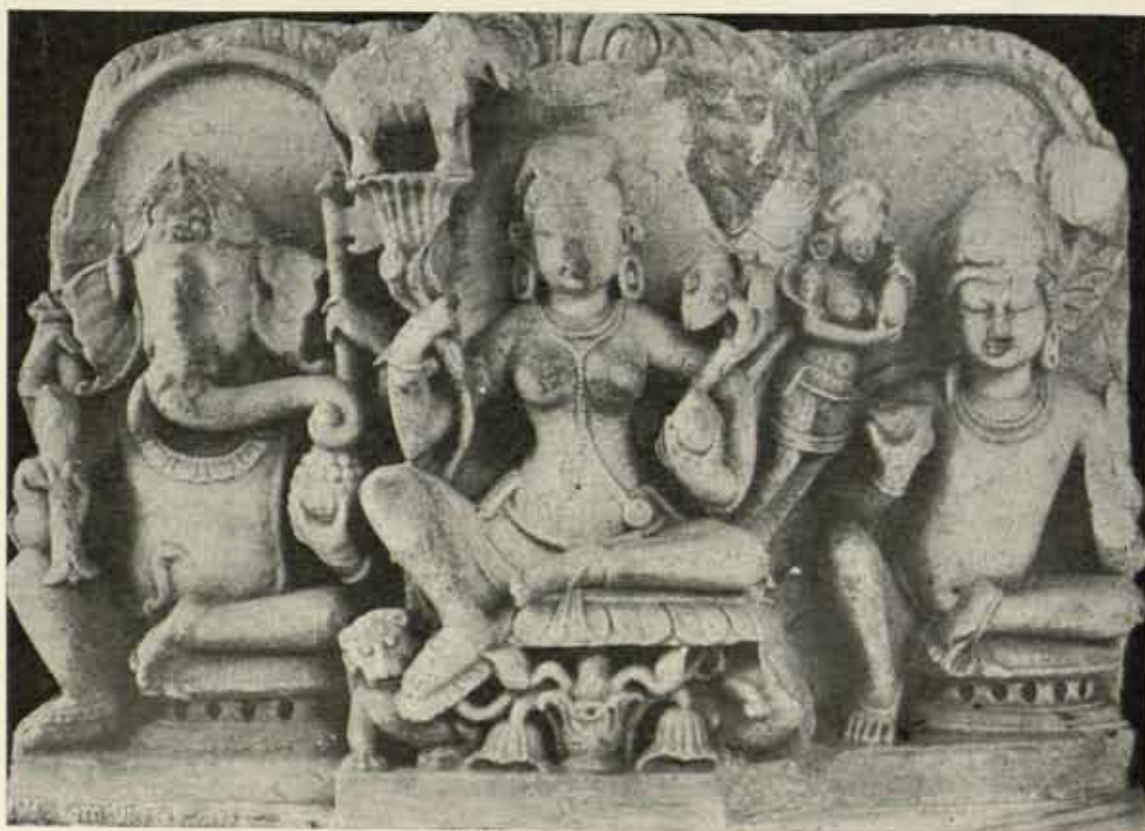
LI Mahiṣamardinī with the Demon in human form, Ambikā temple Jagat, Udaipur.



LII Lower portion of a Sūrya Image, Brahmināṇa Swāmī temple Varmān (Sirohi).



LIII Mahiṣamardinī, Sun temple, Osia.



LIV Gaḷalakṣmī with Gaṇeśa and Kubera, Harṣatmātā temple, Abānerī, Āmber Museum.



LV Mahiṣamardinī, Ambikā temple, Jagat, Udaipur.



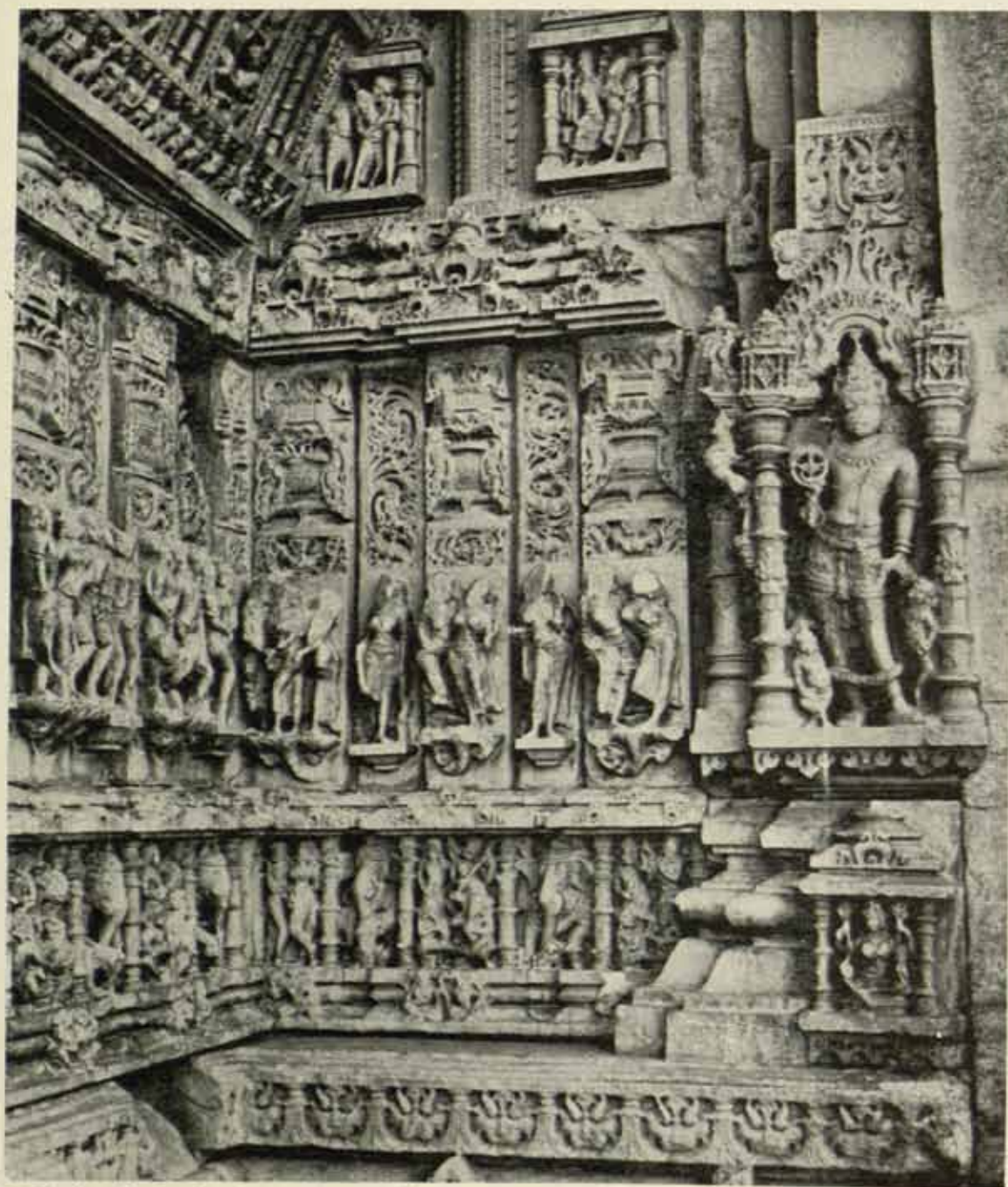
LVI Sūrya and attendants,
Mandesar-Tūsa (Udaipur).



LVII Sūrya, Harṣatmātā temple, Ābānerī,
Āmber Museum



LVIII Sūrya, Harṣanātha temple, Sikar.



LIX Panel showing the carvings of *pīṭha*, Sās temple, Nāgdā.



LXI Image of Sūrya, Harṣanātha temple,
Sikar. Rajputana Museum, Ajmer.



LX Sūrya, Sun temple, Osia.



LXII Sūrya, Bharatpur.



LXIII Leftside of the doorway, Harihara temple, Osia.



LXIV Pañchāyatana Śiva *linga*, Kāmān, Bharatpur,
Rajputana Museum, Ajmer.



LXV Standing Sūrya with *Apsarasas*,
Mandesar-Tūsa (Udaipur).



LXVI Details of the Doorway, Bādolī.



LXVII Harihara, Osia.



LXVIII Harihara, National, Museum, New Delhi.



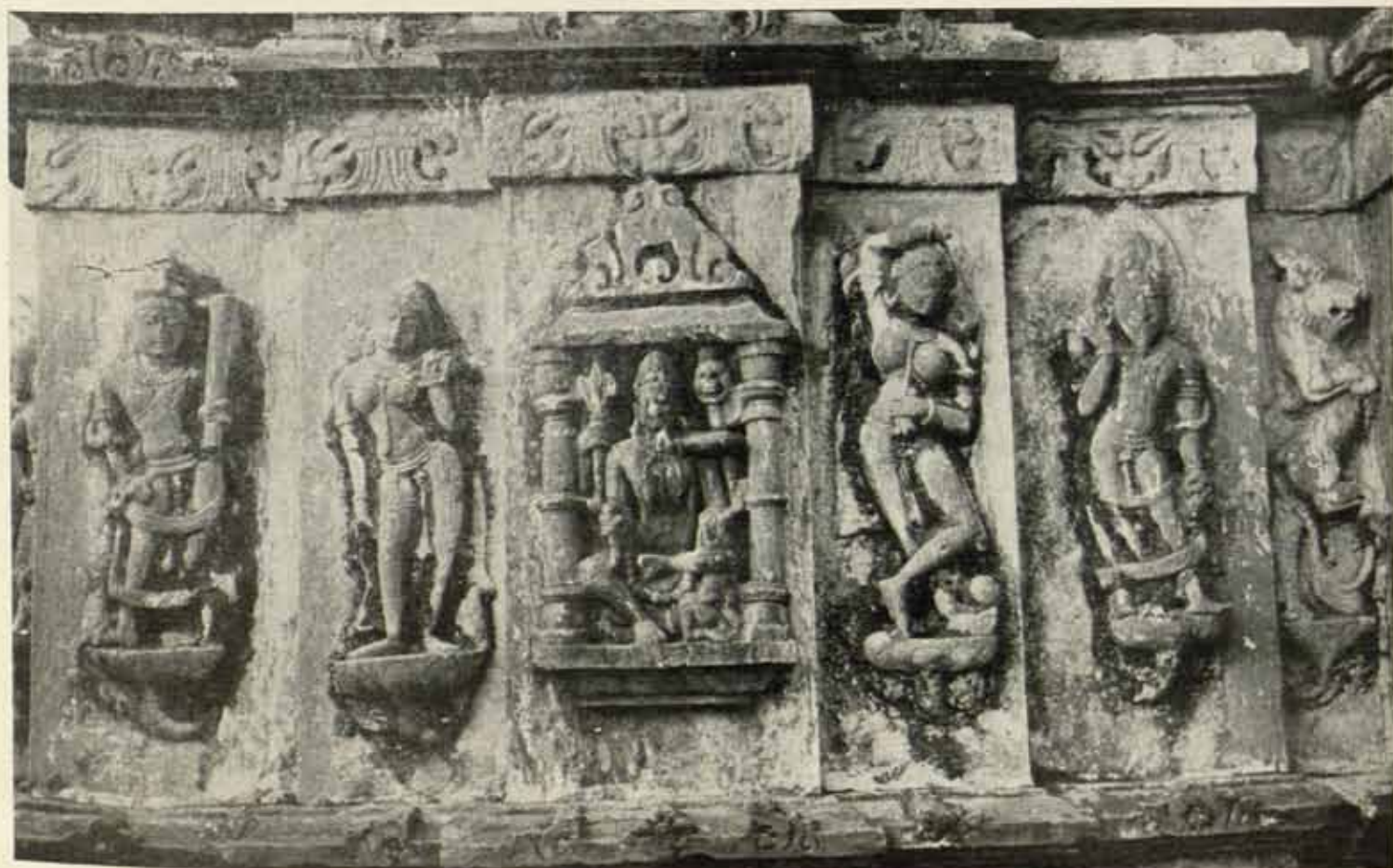
LXIX Composite image of Sūrya, Temple of Sun near the temple of Sachiyāmātā, Osia.



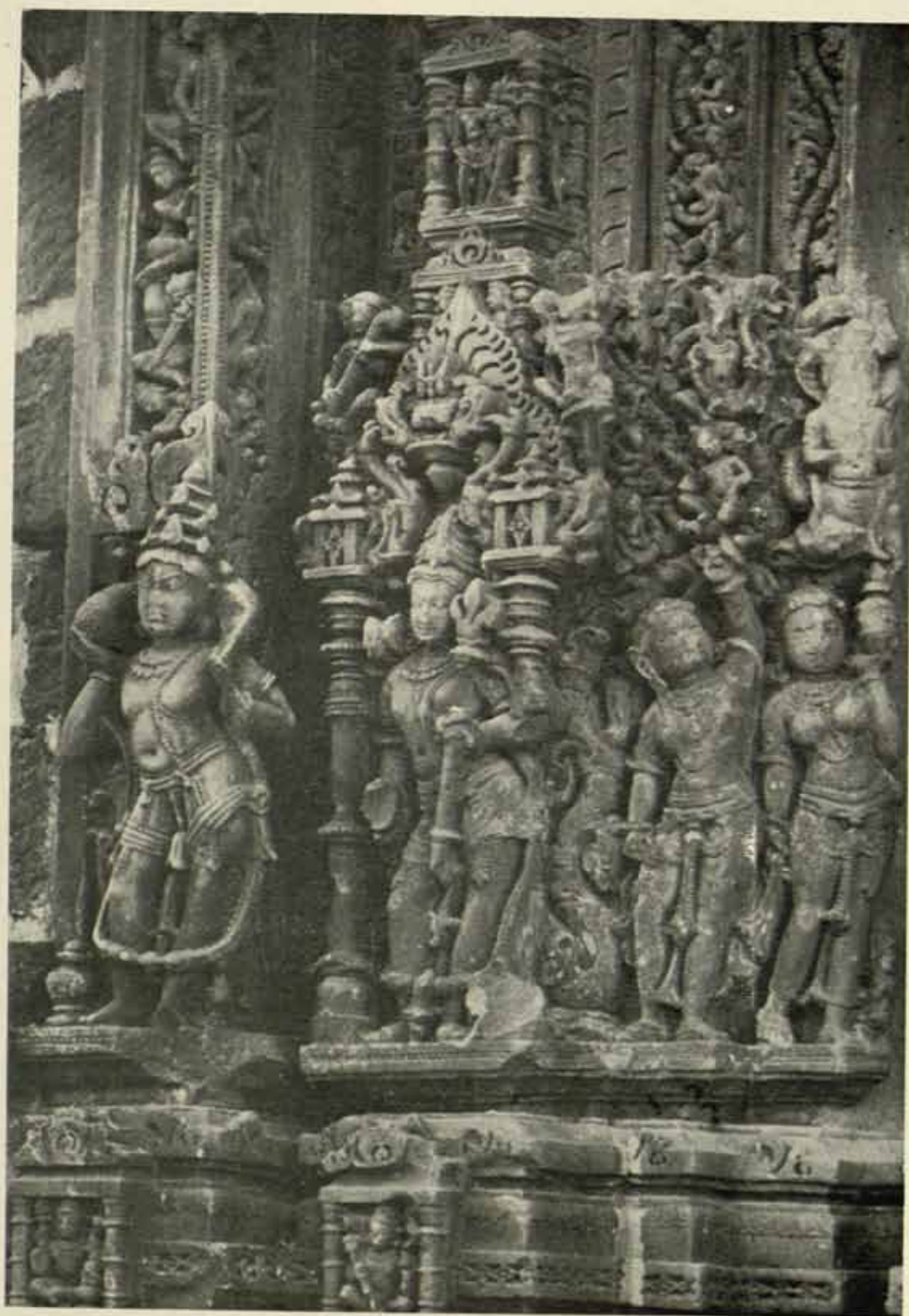
LXX Panel showing the carvings of *pīṭha*, Someśvara temple, Kirāḍū.



LXXI Mārtaṇḍa-Bhairava, Sās temple, Nūgdā.



LXXII Details of the jaṅghā carvings, Īswāl.



LXXIII Details of the doorway, Chandrabhāgā, Jhālarūpāṭan.



LXXIV Doorway of the Ghāṭeśvara temple,
Bādoli.



LXXV Details of the door jambs, Sās temple, Nāgdā.



LXXVI Details of the doorway, Gupta temple, Chittorgarh.



LXXVII Details of the door jamb, Kālikāmātā temple, Chittorgarh.



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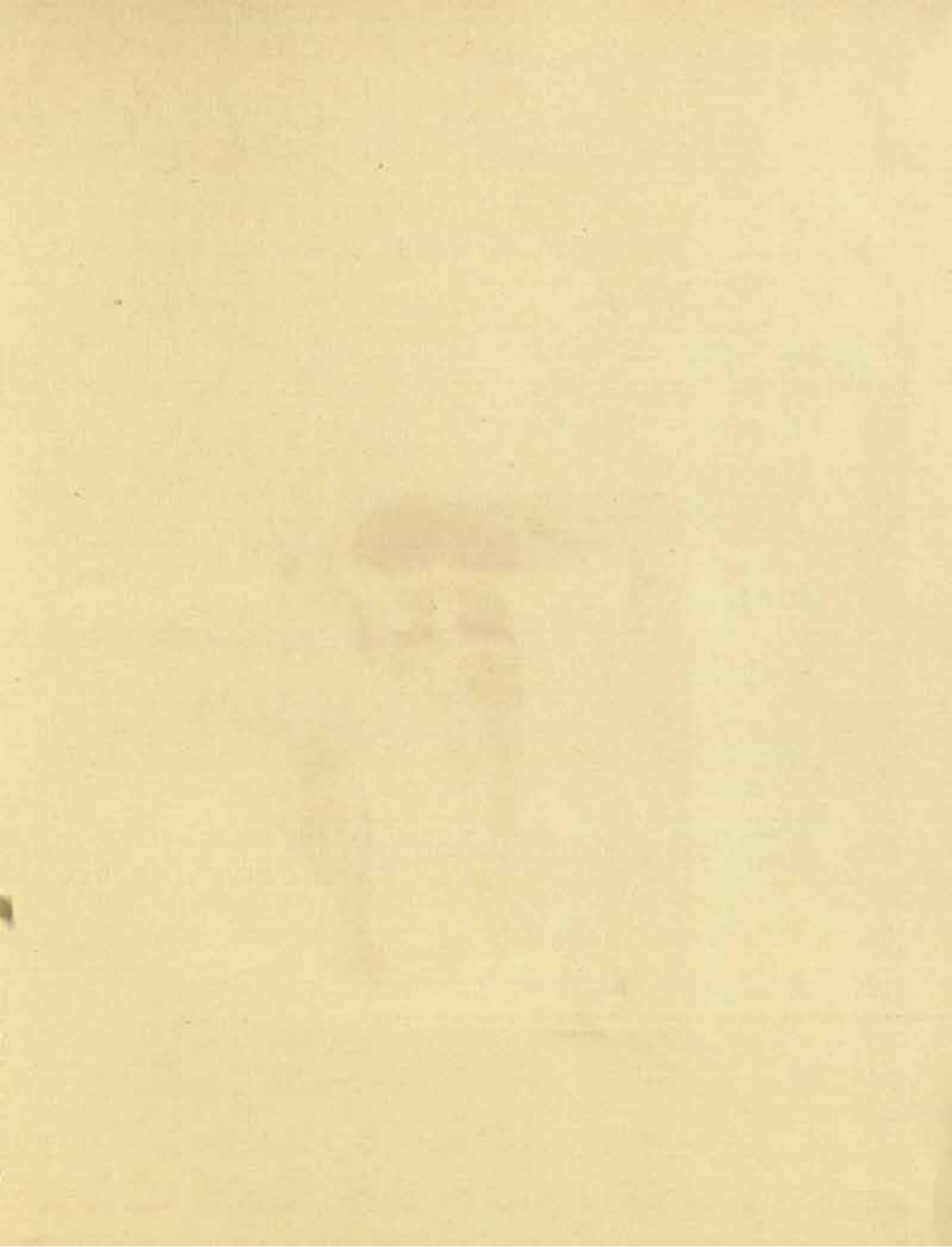
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